THOU ISRAEL

CHARLES FRANCIS STOCKING

Myrtle Lockett
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Uru-salem, seat of Melchisedec and city of peace, had passed into Israel's hands.

—Book 2, Page 177.

THOU ISRAEL

BY

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THE IDENTITY OF DOUGLAS BAIN,
CARMEN ARIZA, Etc.

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THOU ISRAEL

DEDICATION

"AND the seals are being broken in these last days," said Alden. "It is woman who has broken them and given to the world a higher concept of the Christ . . . now she is indeed 'clothed with the sun'. . ."

It is to such a one that the author gratefully dedicates this book—one so 'clothed with the sun' as to fill his life with radiance—his wife.

THOU ISRAEL

PROLOG

THE Eternal Mind thinks in my thoughts, and sees in my beholding.

Nothing is but God, and God is naught but Mind.
Darkly the veil of things rises before me, 'tis mortal mind.
But when the error dies, henceforth there'll live but God in my endeavors. —*Fichte.*

THOU ISRAEL

PROLOG

NEVER had her security seemed so great; never was it actually less. Never had her coffers been so near to bursting; never were they so really empty. Never had she attained so high a standard of living; never was she farther from a knowledge of Life. Never had she luxuriated in such unattenuated materialism; never had she grasped so feverishly for greater carnal riches, nor strained so fearfully to preserve those she believed she already possessed. Never had the sensuous world appeared to her so colorful, so delightfully comic, so interestingly tragic; never had the poppied charms of dogma been so subtly sweet; never had the foolishness of God appeared so utterly foolish to Crestelridge as on that wild March night when, to the doleful knell of the leaden hammer that long had been striking the hours, an age—*her* age—lay dying.

By the Julian calendar it was the year of our Lord 1917. By the reckoning of the chronologers it was Daniel's blessed and final year of the Hegira, his extended "half week." By the calculations of the seers it was the consummation of the full "seven times" of Nebuchadnezzar—the shadow lay upon the closing hour of the "times of the Gentiles"; the treading down of Jerusalem was already low. In the symbolism of the pyramidologists the world had entered the Antechamber of Mizraim's great "altar," that troubled hush wherein righteousness should be laid to the plummet and the refuge of lies exposed before consuming in the swiftly approaching final phase of Armageddon.

Thunderbolts burst from the wrack of clouds rushing over Crestelridge that black night. She but hugged her robes of complaisant smugness the tighter, nor knew that the winds of Truth had already whipped these things of tinsel into rags. Shutters whirred and crashed, casements rattled furiously, trees bent groaning, bricks sprang from chimneys and hurtled madly to the pavements. Crestelridge but drew her curtains

the closer, nor recked that the vacuum in her soul had drawn a rushing wind whose blast would burst her deadly provincialism and blow her out into a boundless area to meet, stripped and alone, her outraged God.

Whir-r-r! . . . Rattle! . . . *Crash!* Frightful cloud shapes streaked through the upper airs; owls screeched; dogs scurried whining. The unleashed wind tore through the belfry of St. Jude's with spectral shrieks. The frightened choir below paused in their practice, with the words: *"I will overturn . . . overturn . . . overturn"* trembling on their lips. The great bronze bells cried out in jangling protest. The wind howled them down. *"They shall wither . . . wither . . . and the whirlwind shall take them away,"* timidly resumed the choir. The blasts drowned their feeble chant in piercing yells that seemed to echo the agonies of the age that lay dying; it rose in wild howls as from maimed bodies; it soughed in the gasping wheeze of torn lungs; it roared in vain ravings to God, in blasphemous curses, in the sickening din of slaughter—and it fell, moaning, and died away among the laboring treetops in long-drawn sighs, whilst a dank mist rose from the soaked earth, exhaling foul odors, suggesting gangrene gas, and stole under doors and loosened casements like the subtle miasmatic poison that had long streamed upward from the rotten soil of Franz Mesmer and gassed a sleeping world.

As the wind fell a young clergyman sprang from his chair in the rector's office in St. Jude's parish house. "Father Whittier," he cried in a tremulous voice, "is there any word from the Lord?"

His companion, the rector, lifted his brows and stared perplexedly at his young assistant. "Well," he returned, "why do you ask that?"

The young man hesitated; then he spoke eagerly. "Because we seem to be living in days that have about them a character of finality."

The older man's brows cleared, and he smiled paternally up into the earnest young face. "Millennianism? Men have gone mad over that, George."

"Then you consider Daniel's vision meaningless?"

The other laughed lightly. "I am reminded of Ted Sayor's comment, that Daniel was subject to nightmare."

The young man made a gesture of impatience. "Your levity is ill timed!"

"Pardon me," said the rector, becoming more serious. "I quoted him merely to show how the world of to-day regards Scriptural prophecy. Daniel, my friend, belongs to an age that is past. His thought was concerned with the restoration.

It came—yet only in part, for the ten tribes remained forever dispersed, and so . . ."

"But they were not destroyed. Their descendants must be living to-day."

"Doubtless," the rector agreed, turning to busy himself with his littered papers. "I dare say they are in China; or perhaps they are our modern Afghans. Perhaps they were the Aztecs, or our North American Indians."

The other reflected for a moment. "Strange," he observed at length, "that so great a people as lost Israel should be sought among the lowest of mankind. There is something wrong. But . . . Daniel's chronology?"

The rector shrugged his shoulders. "Unprofitable speculation for a clergyman in these practical days."

"I do not agree with you," the young man returned with some heat. "If Daniel's prophecy could be authenticated it would prove the Scriptures . . ."

"Eh? Prove the Scriptures?" The rector's head went up and his brows lifted again.

"Does this surprise you? But what other proofs than those of chronology have we—you and I—to offer our people? No, I cannot avoid the conviction that Daniel holds something specific for us at this time. I have always regarded him as inspired, for Jesus referred to him . . . But . . ." He paused and stood lost in thought, while the rector turned again to his desk.

Of a sudden the young assistant looked up. "Father Whittier, Daniel tells us, regarding his prophecy, that none of the wicked shall understand."

"Eh!" exclaimed the rector, jerking up his head. "Well! The inference is . . . er . . . embarrassing!"

"It is more, it is *damning!* Oh, Father Whittier, our people are crying as never before for proofs . . . and we stand mute before them!"

"There, George," said the other, rising and laying a soothing hand upon the young man's arm; "you are tired. You are really overworked. You should . . . But see, there is a lull in the storm. Better take advantage of it."

"There is no lull in the storm that is convulsing the world, and before which we are helpless," cried the young man bitterly. "That is why I came to you to-night, asking if, in these desperate times, there is any word from the Lord . . . if the vision of Daniel, which has been denied to me, perchance had been accorded to you because of your greater scholarship. Is there, I ask again, any definite, *specific* word concerning my problems, or yours, or the world's? Or . . . do you confess

that you stand with me, a false prophet, among those whose attitude is anathema for all that is not habitual?"

"Why . . . why, George! You shock me! You are not well. . . Too close application. . . And this terrible equinoctial weather! Go see Doctor Roake. You can't afford to break down. . ."

The young man shook his head and smiled sadly. "No doctor can reach my case with his pills and lotions. No, Father Whittier, we are false prophets. Our people know it, and they are falling away from us. They are seeking philosophy, spiritualism, the various so-called mental sciences, even the ouija board, because we cannot answer their awful question: *What is truth?* And because we cannot answer it, they and we suffer afflictions and consume with disease; because no one can answer it, the world is aflame to-day. There is something *terribly* wrong with us who hold ourselves interpreters of the Word! What in God's name is it?"

"My dear fellow, the fault is the world's, that it should be so morally frail that it must needs be severely disciplined. . ."

"Is it the world's fault that it is frail?"

"Man fell, you know. . ."

"Say, rather, that man never rose! Man *can't* rise! Since the dawn of history he has remained in a state of restrained savagery! Individually, man is still a creature of the worst animal impulses! That which is created out of the *humus* can never be more than dust! Yet we preach that God created this sort of man!"

"But God created all, George!"

"Then He is responsible for this dust-man, and He must have created him evil and capable of evil!"

"No, George," the rector sighed patiently, "God did not create evil, but He created that which could *become* evil: beings so great, so mightily endowed, that they possessed the power to choose either good or evil. . ."

"Rubbish! You juggle with God!"

"George!"

"Look me squarely in the face and tell me if you still believe the Almighty capable of formulating law that must produce evil, and then punishing His helpless creatures for falling victim to that which in His volition they cannot possibly avoid! If such is still your preachment, then you too stand convicted a false prophet! I tell you, Father Whittier, that unless such miserable dogma is thrown to the scrap heap, unless there is a restatement—a *scientific* statement —of Christianity, unless you and I speedily acquire a new

vision to deal with new problems, new perils, new tasks, we are *lost!*"

"But, my dear George, don't take it so seriously! Why, the dear old world is going to jog on pretty much as it always has! There will be no revolting change, nothing that we shall not easily adjust ourselves to. Civilization will live. . ."

"Civilization!" the young man exclaimed in scorn. "Civilization is merely *coercion!* I tell you, the individual remains what he was, despite us preachers! He is restrained by the rules of civilization, but never reformed! His reformation, if it is to be at all, must come, I am convinced, through an inward change, one so great as to amount to *destruction* of the human mind, the dust-mind, since man's mind is the eternal enemy within himself. But who will tell him this? Who can show him his mental task and direct his inward strivings, his self-explorations, his warfare with himself? You? I? Alas, no! And so the world is again in flames. . ."

"Nonsense! The flare-up in Europe is temporary." The rector was becoming nervous. "And it is not your fault. . ."

"It *is* my fault—and yours—in part! Had we priests of God been obedient to the vision, we had not lost it. Now there is no excuse for our continued existence. Ah, my friend, one of the most precious prerogatives of the ancient priesthood was that of interpreting the divine oracles to the people. Thus arose the prophets. We pretend to follow in their footsteps—oh, we unworthy! But because of our corruption we have lost their power of interpretation. . ."

"Our *corruption!* George, really, I protest!"

"Yes, our dense materiality. And because we lost the vision—or would not see it except distorted through the lens of matter—Christian nations are to-day tearing one another asunder, while the Church stands by, miserably impotent."

He took up his hat and went to the door, where he paused and turned again to the rector. "We profess to believe the New Testament," he said slowly; "but that reports that men were once made whole without drugs or lotions. If it was a fact then, why is it not a fact now? Did Jesus heal? We preach that he did. Did his students heal? We preach it. Do we preach that they healed by mechanical, surgical, or medicinal modes? No; we believe the healing to have been spiritual—mental, if you prefer. Well, what is wanting that *we* don't do likewise, as Jesus bade us? This: we believe that such healing was possible then, but not now. Why? Because *we* can't heal spiritually. But *why* can't we? For the simple reason that *we are not Christians!*"

"George!"

"Oh, yes, we believe in the Bible in a vague manner—but we can't use its teachings practically to meet our every-day needs. We can't heal the sick; we mock those who ask us to raise the dead. And yet Jesus said: 'The hour is coming, and now is—*now* is!—when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God,' of the Christ. But can you call to the dead in that divine voice? Can I? And because we cannot, nor do any of the works that Jesus is reported to have done, the people have no faith in us. Nor can we blame them, for we are utterly unable to *prove* the truth of the Master's teachings.

"And yet," he went on eagerly, "I am convinced that his words shall *not* pass away. The ancient vision *must* be restored. But it will not come through the established Church, for water will not flow through a channel clogged with mud. Yet I believe religious history will be repeated. Moses, who brought about the great religious revival and led the Israelites out of Egyptian bondage, was a layman, uncorrupted by the priesthood. So Luke reports that 'Annas and Caiaphas being the high priests, the word of God came unto *John*'—not unto the Church or its priests, but to an outsider! So Christianity itself came through the layman Jesus. So I think the spiritual vision that heals and saves will come again through one who, though outside the Church, will be sufficiently free from material idols to perceive that God is Spirit—with all that that connotes. Indeed . . ." He paused and stood for a moment with bowed head. Then he raised his eyes to the rector. "I sometimes think it will come through a . . . *woman*."

The rector's mouth gaped, but speech delayed. Then he went to the young man and laid an arm about his shoulders. "George," he said tenderly, "your zeal has led you into mental confusion. Check it, ere it lead you into unhappiness, or worse. These are days of rampant speculation. They may be, as you have intimated, days of transition. But the Church will stand. And you and I. . . Do not forget in your excessive zeal that you have yourself to consider, as well as your flock. Discretion, George. . ."

"A warning against heresy?" The young man smiled cynically. "If my convictions be heresy, then report me at once to the bishop, that I may be unfrocked before I bring discredit upon the Nicean creed. But, Father Whittier, can you honestly say that my convictions are not your own? And can we, in the face of recent world-events, deliberately choose to remain in an institution that no longer exercises a commanding influence for truth within the community? Let us not

disguise facts. There is now a definite anti-Christian drift throughout the world. The masses have ceased to look to us for guidance. They have discovered our feet of clay. They have found the Church a negligible quantity in political and economic life, voiceless when she should have thundered from the housetops, helpless and despised in these last days when she should be wearing the wreath of spiritual victory. They have found you and me false prophets, disseminators of undemonstrable human opinion, garblers of truth. . . Why, your own daughter, Marian . . ."

"Stop, George! I cannot permit you to speak thus to me!"

A wistful smile came into the young man's face. "Forgive me," he said in a choking voice. "Her spirit of revolution has got hold of me."

"Let it not lead you down the path of sorrow and disgrace," counseled the rector severely. Then his manner softened. "And consider, George, what you would do should you be so hasty as to leave the Church. You have . . . er . . . your living to make. . ."

At that instant a tremendous peal of thunder burst over the church edifice and shook it to its foundations. The rector shrank back, clutching the other's arm. "The storm is resuming," he said in a shaking voice as he pulled himself together. "You had better go." And he opened the door and bowed the young man out.

As the assistant passed down the marble corridor he heard the singing of the distant choir. Faint through the tumult of the rising wind he caught the words: *"As in the days of Noe . . . of Noe."* He halted and stood listening. Outside, the swirling wind seemed to take up and repeat the refrain: *"As in the days of Noe . . . of Noe. . ."* Then he opened the door and went out into the storm.

In the unseen realm of human consciousness Merodach, warring against Tiamat, was rocking the visible world. In the cataclysmic upheaval old standards of thought went crashing to their fall; hoary beliefs, age-honored, sacred, sank hissing in the furious chemicalization. Into the vast void that typified the spiritual vacuity of Crestelridge the wind of the wilderness poured, whirling angrily through boulevards, avenues, alleys; driving clouds of sere leaves and detritus before it; dashing struggling pedestrians against walls and poles; and raging furiously around the stubborn materialism in its path. Against a lighted window on an upper floor of the suburb's finest business block it hurled itself with a mad yell, then broke and died away in a despairing groan.

"A nasty night, Doctor," remarked one of the two men

within, turning toward the window. "Do you suppose this wind is due to the cannonading over in France?"

"To their thinking, rather," the other amended with a smile, and speaking in a deep, rich voice. "The wind is externalized thought."

"Externalized thought?" The speaker laughed lightly. "Another of your metaphysical subtleties, I presume. But, I say," becoming serious, "if only a wind like this could be harnessed and controlled . . . eh?"

"A tremendous power; but, again, nothing when compared with the power of harnessed and controlled thought. *That* would be omnipotent for either good or evil."

"H'm! Particularly for the latter, I infer."

"Yes, for evil thought is demonstrably more powerful than good."

His companion sat reflecting for some moments. Then he looked up. "Say, Roake, that starts an interesting speculation. Suppose a man should . . . well, should base his life on the premise that evil thought is more powerful than good . . . Say! . . . Don't look at me so sharply; your eyes seem to make me nervous. . . I get dizzy when you stare at me that way!"

The other relaxed and broke into a laugh. Then he became serious. "The result, Chaddock, would depend on the man's ability to control the thought of others."

"And that can't be done successfully."

"No? Why, Chaddock, the extent to which not only individuals but entire nations are moved and swayed by mental influences is incalculable! What of the German people, a nation whose thinking is controlled almost to a man? Most remarkable example of hypnosis in all history!"

"Egad! you're right. And that is why they are going to win this war."

"They will fail—but only because they departed from their mental mode and resorted to physics. With a hypnotized people, a people thoroughly prepared by suggestive propaganda, their leaders swerved, through fear and impatience, and tried to finish the task of overcoming the world by employing brute force. They were quite correct in believing that they could dominate the world; but they should have stuck to the only possible means of accomplishing that end."

"I see: mesmerism, eh?"

"Suggestion. They had the world nearly anesthetized. Had they continued their mental manipulation, without resorting to material force, they would have shortly brought every nation on the globe under tribute." He bent forward and touched

the other on the knee. "Chaddock," he said, speaking very impressively, "it's because the people don't want to think. Thinking is a laborious process, and they want it done for them. Hence the power of the Church, of the press, of us doctors. . . Why, do you know, I could, by mental propaganda alone, create an epidemic of disease that would kill thousands. And by the same means I could stop it."

He paused and flicked the ashes from his cigar. "You believe that you think, that you are the creator of your own conclusions, the master of your own conduct." He laughed. "But let me ask you how you have arrived at any given conclusion or determined upon a particular line of conduct, and you will have to confess, upon analysis, that you have been swayed throughout by influences not your own."

Again he paused. Then he resumed reflectively. "Thought! It is a strange, indefinable power. And yet it is real, even tangible, for it expresses itself in objects as well as actions. By our thought we are held mired in the sloughs of life, or carried over unseen depths to places of power and wealth. He whose thoughts are uncontrolled is like a ship adrift without power or compass, the plaything of wind and tide; he who controls his thinking becomes possessed of unlimited power, psychic, dynamic. Such a thinker lays friend and stranger, circumstance, environment, the winds of fate, yea, the very elements of life under tribute. A real thinker, like Marian Whittier, for example, startles the world like a bursting bomb."

"But there are some who consider Marian Whittier dangerous."

The other returned the cigar to his mouth and sat back with a smile. "Dangerous? Yes . . . unless herself controlled."

With a shriek the wind sprang up and belabored the window so furiously that both men started to their feet. Then it whirled away and went roaring across the crouching town.

At the far end of the narrow draw in which Crestelridge lay, a violent gust brought up against the rickety door of a small, weather-beaten house with such force that the lock snapped and the door flew open. A young man, tall, thin, and black of hair, sprang to close it. "God of Israel," he cried, "what a night!" Then he paused, with his head inclined toward the adjoining bedroom, and stood listening.

"Should not the heavens fall when one of the chosen abandons the faith of his fathers?" The speaker raised his hoary head and gazed fixedly at the young man.

The latter wheeled sharply and went to his venerable com-

panion. "Rabbi," he said in a gentle but determined voice, "you came through the storm to-night because my dove called you. My heart bursts with gratitude—and with grief, for you admit that you cannot heal her. Your prayers to Jehovah fail. Yet you believe that from its incipience Judaism recognized the healing power of God and demonstrated it. What then? I say, our people fell under the spell of materialism, they strayed far from the true teachings and drifted into fruitless observance of outward form and ceremonial. Because the healing system employed by the ancient Hebrews is abandoned, disease and countless afflictions, war and catastrophies, are now upon us. Because of it, you and I sit helpless beside my suffering dove to-night. But I cannot let her die; and so I shall beg the great Gentile doctor to come and save her. Is that sin?"

"Nay, I do not reproach you for seeking unto the Gentile doctor, my son," the old man answered; "but lest you go after their false gods. Oh, David, forsake not the faith of your people!"

"But, Rabbi, if the Gentile physician have the skill to cure my dove, perchance his preacher too may possess the skill of prophecy to explain me why the promises of Israel's restitution and glory have not been fulfilled. For fulfilled they are *not*, Rabbi, as you must admit when you cast your eyes over the miserable circumstances of the Jewish people to-day. Does not their condition powerfully refute all the Bible promises of restoration to Israel?"

"God is just."

"Then where, I ask, is the wonderful people of Israel that were prophesied to be a nation forever? Is Jeremiah not discredited? It is prophesied that Israel shall rise to be chief of the nations—*chief!* Yet look at the despised Jew of to-day!"

"God is just," murmured the old man.

"You have made your God a God of the past. Your Messiah is of the indefinite future. But my needs are of the present," the young man retorted impatiently. "Ah, Rabbi, my soul, like the world to-day, is awhirl! Can it rest till it find its Creator? But if you teach truth, then is not the God of the Hebrew Scripture foresworn?"

"God of our fathers!" cried the old man. "Shall not the Jewish faith live on? The faith that has survived the Pharaohs, the Czars, the Spanish Inquisition, through fifty centuries? Would you be converted from it to the Christian's dogma?"

"If the Christian's faith will heal my dove. . ."

The Rabbi gasped. "David Barach, *apostate!*"

"Not apostate, Rabbi, but awake to my danger, for too long have I slept under the mesmerism of our inert faith. Not apostate, but seeking truth. Ah, Rabbi, the rise and fall of every age, of every people, every individual, has been based on the answer to the terrible question: *What is truth?* Do Moses and the prophets tell us? Nay, the glorious promises have *not* been fulfilled; nor can the Jewish people ever verify them. We wait in vain."

Whir-r-r! . . . Rattle! . . . *Crash!* Materialistic concepts went shattering before the flying winds of God. Ancient thought-forms splintered. Faiths baptized in blood crumbled and were blown afar. The hypnotic conviction that things were forever settled broke from its roots and fell prone. There were few in Crestelridge who would enter the Ark and ride the rising flood; there were many who would continue to ridicule the foolishness of God and perish. Against stately "Craggmont" the gale beat in Cyclopean rage. Within, in the beautiful music-room, a careless group heard it and laughed.

"Can you see the old witch on the hill riding her broomstick, Alden?"

A laugh rose about the young speaker, who was seated at the piano. The one addressed turned from the window, through which he had been peering into the storm. "The Galuth, Ted?" he asked in a drawling voice.

"You've guessed it, Aldy-boy, your *particular* friend."

"I say now, she's no friend of mine, as you jolly well know! My word! She's your shame! In London we wouldn't tolerate her! But she shows what's coming here in America: female domination."

"Don't get Alden started on female domination," laughed one of the young men; "he'll wilt his collar!"

"Whew!" exclaimed a young girl, glancing toward the windows; "listen to that wind!"

The one at the piano laughed again. "If old Tom is out in it with his big umbrella I'll wager he's gone soaring after the Galuth," he said.

"Who is old Tom?" someone asked.

"Why, the ancient derelict who goes about with an enormous umbrella covered with Bible quotations about getting right with God, and Jesus is coming, and that stuff. Probably he's gone up to meet the Galuth, and the two will hold an ecumenical council behind a big, *black CLOUD-D-D!*" his voice swelling in volume as he pronounced the final words. Then, having delivered himself of this observation, he whirled on the piano bench and plunged into a galloping execution of the latest jazz score.

"What's a ecky-mennical council, Teddybear?" purred a scantily clad, exquisitely coiffured young girl, as she slid her creamy arms over his shoulders and bent to rub a highly rouged cheek against his.

He turned and whispered in her ear. "It's a seance of religious blacksmiths for the purpose of forging mental chains for weak minds. But don't tell Alden I said so. There, Ethel darling," he continued aloud, "I can't keep up this pace long. Grab Harris and step while the ivories are hot."

With a merry laugh the girl turned and threw herself into the waiting arms of a young man standing near, and the two trotted away in a wriggling embrace so close as to make their every breath a gasp. . .

Of a sudden came a sharp, crackling sound, followed by a deafening peal of thunder. The young man at the window cried aloud and jerked down the shade. The dancers stopped short and crouched as if awaiting a blow. The one at the piano wheeled about and laughed again. "Roll-call!" he shouted. "Alden Cragg, present?"

"I say," exclaimed that white-faced young worthy, when the reverberation of the thunder had died away, "let's not dance! It's Lent, ye know. . ."

"Now, Alden!" protested Ethel Whittier. "You're always a wet blanket!"

At that instant a tall, gray-haired woman, gowned in black silk, came hastily into the room, followed by a liveried butler. "Alden!" she exclaimed. There were tears of relief in her eyes when they fell upon her son.

"Why, mother!" The young man hurried to her and put an arm about her shoulders.

She stood, covering her eyes with her trembling hands for a moment, then raised her head and smiled wanly up into his face. "It is nothing . . . a little fright, Alden dear," she said in a shaking voice. She looked off vacantly toward the window. "In that terrible flash of lightning I seemed to see you . . ."

"Me?"

". . . in battle."

"In battle! *Mother!"* The youth's face again went white. A suppressed titter rose from the piano bench.

"There, dear, it has passed. I had been reading of the atrocities . . . so foolish of me!" She shivered slightly, then turned to the others. "There will be a little refection in the breakfast room shortly," she said, controlling her voice. "Jedkins will announce it. Don't dance too late; to-morrow is Sunday. Isn't it an *awful* night?" With which, and a final yearning glance at her son, she left the room.

For some moments after her departure the young people remained silent. Then Ted Sayor turned again to the piano and broke into a song of his own composition:

"It's Laodiceans we are; it's Laodiceans we are;
We know not the cold, we know not the fire;
We know not the cause that leads men to war. . ."

"Ted!" There was a lingering note of terror in Alden Cragg's voice.

Ted rose abruptly and jammed his hands into the pockets of his trousers. "Well," he exclaimed, "we can't dance and we can't sing!"

"But not war songs, Ted! I . . . hate them!"

"Well, I don't blame you; the war *is* a nuisance."

"Nuisance!" Madeline Nence ejaculated. "It's a positive outrage! Why, I can't get a thing in dress materials any more! And such rotten dyes!"

"An awful inconvenience," sighed Ted sympathetically. "I haven't seen an imported cravat for a year. And as for silk socks and underwear . . ."

"Well, I don't know," put in Wallie Black; "Dad's cleaned up another million out of it, so I should worry."

"Government contracts for beef, eh?" said Ted. "Yes, the war has its little consolations."

"Consolations?" echoed Wallie's sister, Louise. "For some of us, perhaps. But when I think of those ruined homes and . . ."

"But won't it be fun to visit the ruins when it's all over!" chirped Ethel Whittier. "All those towns blown to pieces, and the people living in funny little cellars. Mama and I are planning to go all over Europe, and spend months and months in Paris and London. Papa says if he went with us he'd go to Jerusalem and down into Egypt and visit the Pyramids—old Chop's tomb. Papa runs to tombs!"

"They symbolize his religion," Ted offered, with a sly glance around at Alden Cragg.

"Now, I say," protested the latter, "Father Whittier is preparing a series of sermons against all this new-fangled rot about the Pyramid being inspired, and about these being the 'last days'."

"Well, I'd be willing they should be the 'last days' if I could spend them in the good old Paris and Vienna of pre-war times," lamented Harris Chaddock. "Lord, that was *life!*"

"Oh, if the blooming rumpus would only let up over there!" groaned Wallie Black.

"It can't last much longer," Ted observed cheerfully. "Especially if America goes in."

"Which she will not," remarked Otto Hoeffel, a blond young man with close-cropped head, square shoulders, and decidedly Teutonic features.

"Please God," Ted returned in mock solemnity. "If I could trust your prophecy, Otto, I'd hand you a goodly check."

"But why should she?" Otto insisted argumentatively. "It's no quarrel of ours, is it? America will stay out."

"Speaking of the war," Harris Chaddock put in, "I heard a strange thing in Doctor Roake's office to-day. It has been discovered that some of the soldiers suffering from shell shock revert to an earlier stage of mental existence and become unable to walk or talk, can't take any food but milk. It's called mental regression, and undoubtedly the mental state of such patients is that of a child. They have the child's consciousness, see things as children do."

Ted Sayor broke into a laugh. "It would be a joke if in their retrogression they didn't stop at their infancy, but went on back to Nero's time, or the period of Rameses!"

"Perfectly possible," Harris averred.

"They might find themselves present at the turning of the water into wine," offered the grinning Freddy Kerl. "That would be great. They'd find out whether the Lord made sherry or just plain claret, eh?"

A shout of laughter went up. "Now, Freddy, we're talking war, not weddings," admonished Madeline Nence.

"Now, I say," Alden Cragg broke in petulantly, "can't you people let the bally war alone? Why do you insist on bringing up all the horrors?"

"There, Aldy-boy," Ted comforted, "we'll cease to harrow your sensitive soul. Let's see, what less disquieting topic can we discuss while waiting for Jedkins? Oh, you didn't finish your remarks on equal suffrage. . ."

"Say," laughed Wallie Black, "I warned you not to get him started on female domination! Alden's British, you know."

"But," Ted teased, "he's a Christian too. And 'male and female created He them'. . ."

"But the male *first*," Alden interposed warmly.

"Ergo, your warrant for male supremacy, eh? I yield. We'll change the subject. H'm! How about the Zionist movement back to Palestine? Current and interesting."

"Oh, my Lord!" cried Ethel Whittier, "to mention Jews to Alden is like waving a red flag at a bull."

"But the Jews are . . ."

"Hogs!" Alden finished abruptly. "Go down Grand Avenue where they promenade four abreast and see if they don't crowd you into the street."

"Alden wins!" shouted Ted. "Next topic?"

"I'll tell you," young Hoeffel offered, "get the ouija board and let's ask it about that battle Alden's mother saw him in."

"Oh, *lovely*, Otto!" cried Ethel, dancing up and down.

"Now, I say . . ." from Alden.

"Ethel wants to know if she's going to be a charming young widow, with lovely 'Craggmont' to mourn in," piped Madeline Nence.

Another general laugh, followed by more cries of "Get the ouija board!" . . . "Have Jedkins bring it!". . . "Alden is horribly superstitious!"

"Now, I say," Alden loudly protested, "talk anything, sing anything, but leave out war, suffrage, and Jews! I hate all three!"

"Including the Galuth, eh, Aldy-boy?"

"Slip me a cigarette, Harris," whispered Ethel, sidling up to that young man who slid an arm about her slender waist. "Please, good doggie! I'll smoke it going home. And," she muttered, "I'll slap Nence's doll face for her if she makes any more cracks at me, the smart little fool!"

"The ouija board!" chorused the other guests.

"No, I say, I refuse, even if I am host!"

"Isn't Alden the baby!" murmured Ethel Whittier scornfully to Harris Chaddock. "He's afraid of his shadow! Mention the word 'death' to him and he goes into convulsions!"

Ted Sayor lounged across the room and dropped into an easy chair. "It's Lent, all right!" he laughed. "Fasting, you know, means elimination of sense—at least, that's what Marian says. But, bah! doing without is mere negation, not positive virtue. However," with a sigh, "I waste my perfume on desert air. Well, Aldy-boy, let's observe Lent by holding a little spiritual retreat." He sat up stiffly and assumed a pedantic air. "Advanced class in religious philosophy, up!" he called. "Ah, Mr. Hoeffel, kindly state explicitly the desideratum of religion."

" 'In religion we desire atheism,' as the good German socialist, August Bebel, says," replied Otto, grinning.

"But," objected Ted in mock seriousness, "we believed the Germans a Christian people; we discover them heathen."

"The German rulers, my friend, have wisely seen that it is a political mistake for a nation to accept Christianity," Otto returned. "You will acknowledge it yourself some day."

Ted shook his head. "Too advanced," he insisted. "You're dismissed. Next, primary class, up! Now, Miss Whittier, do you believe in hell?"

"No," laughed Ethel. "Do you?"

"Assuredly, for hasn't the Kaiser demonstrated its existence? Next question: What is truth?"

"Oh, Lord! This from such a prevaricator!"

"Insinuating that I am incompetent to judge? Wrong again, as I shall prove. For, if the Reverend Wilson Whittier opposes a thing, if Doctor Roake fights it, if Alden Cragg frowns upon it, if Crestelridge society condemns it, and if Senator Chaddock frames laws against it, why, that thing is certain to be truth. For example, what Marian Whittier says about the Wess bill. . . Oh, I say, Otto, you haven't satisfactorily explained yet why you didn't bring Marian tonight. . ."

"Ted!" cried Alden Cragg, glancing apprehensively at Otto's darkling face. The others snickered. . .

Then Jedkins appeared and announced the refection.

Whir-r-r! . . . Rattle! . . . *Crash!* The fury of the gale increased. A tree splintered beneath a bolt and fell across the path of a young girl mounting the hill opposite "Craggmont." For a moment she stood gasping, leaning against the wind; then she went slowly on. The storm howled around her; the lightning hissed in her face. She bent her head and toiled doggedly upward. At the top of the hill the defeated wind, in a final onslaught, caught her up and hurled her against the door of the cottage toward which she had been struggling. Her hand grasped the knob, the door burst open, and the wind dashed her to the floor within.

A white-haired woman hurried to shut out the storm and raise the girl. "Marian!" she exclaimed. "What brings you out on such a night as this?"

The girl threw off her coat and sank panting into a chair. "Alden . . .!" she gasped.

The woman stood over her, waiting. A single lamp filled the room with a mellow glow. A brisk fire crackled on the grate.

"Alden," the girl continued excitedly, "is . . . Oh, Madam Galuth, he is in the *greatest* danger! Otto Hoeffel came to ask me to go to Alden's home with him this evening! I . . . I could not! . . . you know why! Then he . . ." She buried her face in her hands.

The woman waited. The girl raised her head. "He . . . asked me to . . . marry him! I refused, and he became very angry! Oh, it was not what he said, but what I saw back of his words! It all came to me in a flash. . . Doctor Roake, Senator Chaddock, Otto . . . I saw it *all!*"

"And you fled," said the woman, laying a hand on the girl's shoulder. "You saw the drive coming, and you fell back

before it. And yet," she added reflectively, "Joffre fell back to the Marne."

"But . . . if I face him . . . Alden will be destroyed!"

The woman stood regarding her for some moments. Then: "The drive is not against Alden, Marian, but against *you.*"

The girl rose abruptly and threw her arms about the other's neck. For a moment they stood in close embrace; then the woman gently disengaged herself and sat down. The girl sank upon the floor beside the chair and laid her head in the woman's lap.

For a few moments the woman gently stroked the girl's disheveled hair. Then she bent and kissed it. "The command is to turn, dearie, turn and go forward without fear." She reached out and took from an adjacent table some papers filled with writing. "Will you let me tell you a story?" she asked, smiling down at the brown head in her lap.

A grateful warmth from the fireplace spread through the room. The girl, overwrought by her mental battle and exhausted by her struggle with the storm, relaxed with a deep sigh. A great peace came upon her. Her eyes closed, and drowsiness stole over her senses. She roused and struggled against it. Then she yielded. Yet she strove to follow the woman's words, to visualize the picture she drew. Presently her imagination seemed to become unwontedly active. Then before it a vast panorama appeared to unfold. . .

It was the valley of the Jordan, cleaving the Holy Land like a gash from a gigantic scimiter. Through this enormous wound the one river of Palestine was hurrying to its grave in the Dead Sea. Above the lake of Gennesaret the valley appeared to contract painfully into a jagged cut; below, it pressed its mountainous ligatures back until, approaching the site of modern Jericho, it gaped to a width of many miles of burning plain. Time had paused and rolled back its scroll. It was the last watch of a night that fell just before the "morning-time in Canaan." And on the west bank of the river a host lay encamped, anxiously awaiting the day.

In type it was a military encampment, such as had dotted the plains of Canaan from time immemorial; yet it gave evidence of a host hurriedly assembled and hard driven. Scores of war chariots encircled it, some broken and battered, some with their iron scythes twisted and ominously red-stained. Within this protecting fringe hundreds of camels and horses, cattle, sheep, and goats huddled in the penetrating chill. Travel-stained warriors, clad variously in robes of camel's-hair or pelisses of sheep-skin, lay among them, sleeping heavily on

their arms, or keeping a nodding watch of the restive brutes. Fires smoldered here and there, yet their fitful flashes scarce penetrated the heavy mist that streamed steadily up from the adjacent river and drowned the yellow light of the cold stars in a watery pall. In the center of the camp, within another protecting circle of mud-caked wagons and two-wheeled carts, were grouped several large tents, each with a tribal standard set before it, and all surrounded by a hundred smaller tents of varying size and type. In the exact center of this inner circle rose a larger tent of black goat's-hair, conspicuous not only for its standard denoting the tribe of Abram, son of Terah, son of Heber, but for the hastily erected pillar of stones that stood before it. The skin suspended over its entrance was partly drawn, and through the aperture thus formed a gleam of light escaped into the blackness without.

Beyond the river a lonely jackal suddenly shattered the stillness with a despairing wail. A hungry lion, creeping through the canebrake, with its eyes on the gleam from the large tent, raised its head and sent forth an angry roar. The cattle started up, snorting with terror; men woke in alarm and sprang to their weapons; children whimpered; dogs bayed; the skin before the great tent was drawn quickly aside and a man appeared, casting a shadow before him, huge as the fabled sons of Rephaim.

For some moments the man stood peering out into the mist; then, as the alarm abated and quiet settled again over the camp, he drew a deep sigh and raised his eyes to the stars.

"When shall I arise and the night be gone?"

His plaint floated into the unanswering darkness, and all was still. As his head sank, his gaze rested for a moment upon the stone pillar. A change came over his face. He drew himself up and turned back into the tent. The light that now fell full upon him from a suspended lamp of rare Chaldean workmanship revealed a figure that had been cast in a mold of noble proportions. His head, of a size commensurate with his great frame, was crowned by a mane of iron-gray hair. His strong, bearded face, browned by the hot winds that sweep the plains of Mamre, reflected a lofty quality of thought quite rare in those idolatrous days. His nose was prominent; his eyes large, deeply black, and heavily shaded by bold brows. His garb was the conventional one of the tribal rulers of early Canaanitish times, with the exception of the long, loose shirt of fine linen, which indicated the wearer's acquaintance with Egypt. Over this he had thrown a cloak of padded wool, rich with Babylonian embroidery. On his feet were sandals of Assyrian type, encasing the heel and sides of the foot. A large

and exquisitely wrought signet ring circled the index finger of his right hand. As he moved, his demeanor, like his appearance, was graceful, serious, commanding.

"What avails your faith in your unseen God, my father, when evil, like yonder lion, roars ever beside your tent?"

The speaker, a man of perhaps fifty years, drew a heavy camel's-hair robe closely about him and sank shivering upon a pile of rich rugs and skins in a corner of the tent. His facial resemblance to the older man bespoke a close kinship; but his smaller frame, with its lack of dignity; his effeminate hands; his white skin, and his calculating gaze that appraised all things in Rialto terms, indicated that the kinship was physical rather than of the soul.

"Again I ask, what avails your chance victory over the drunken slaves of Kudur-Lagamar," the younger man continued bitterly, "since thereby you have challenged mighty Elam, striving for world-power? From distant Hobah we have fallen steadily back before their swiftly gathering hosts, our warriors dropping like withered leaves. The adversary hangs now upon our flanks, breathing his hymns of hate to mighty Ishtar. Will he not strike when the night watch ends and day floods again the plain?"

"Doubtless he will strike," the other answered gravely. "For God lets not evil rest till it be destroyed."

"And shall we remain to receive the blow, and with it certain death or, for me, again the yoke? You might have bargained for my freedom with your wealth, but now . . . And yet I shall escape, and you with me, if you will but heed my counsel! O my father, our cousin Shaul, himself descended through Nahor from our common father Heber, and therefore worthy of our confidence, knows well the mountain passes westward to the coast, and the traveled road that leads from thence to Egypt. He shall guide us this night out of the hand of the Elamite and into the sheltering hills. Unhampered by these numerous souls, flight will be rapid, and soon the nodding palms of happy Egypt shall bid us welcome. There let us end our days, in Egypt, blessed by her gods with abundance and sweet peace. . ."

"A false peace where peace is not, my son," was the patient answer.

A shade crossed the younger man's face, and his retort sprang angrily to his lips. "You dare not seek again the favor of great Mykerinos, whose welcome you did so offend that he drove us from his realm! Was it your unseen God that bade you lie to Pharaoh?"

The older man sighed and stood for a moment regarding

his companion. Then, in a low tone: "I have told you, my son, and again I repeat: a consuming longing surcharged my thought with fear lest Sarrat, my wife, be seized by Pharaoh, and God's promise of progeny remain to me forever void. . ."

"Ah, your unseen God was weaker then than Bel!"

"Not God, O Lot, my son, but *I* was weak." His voice fell. "I lied to Pharaoh through wavering faith in Him."

A mocking smile came into the face of the younger man. "You are Abu-ramu, prince and chief," he said in a voice laden with sarcasm, "accounted wise in the learning of the Chaldees. Yet did you then, as now, expose yourself to sure destruction because of the silly notion that your unseen God will make of you a mighty nation! Of you and Sarrat, stricken in years and blown like chaff before the hosts of Elam!"

He rose and stood trembling before the other. The camel's-hair robe had slipped from his shoulders, but in his agitation he heeded it not.

"Say now, O Abu-ramu," he went on heatedly, "what good this idle notion has brought you that your faith remains so strong—for well you know what it has wrought for me! Because of it my father Haran perished in Ur, striving to rescue the images of our gods from the temple which, in mad frenzy, you did set in flames! For grief at this, and persecuted because of your own most stubborn notion of a solitary unseen God, your father Terah left our ancient seat of Ur; nor found he rest, despised by those whose gods had been outraged by you, until at Kharran his harassed soul took flight! What then? Forthwith you did abandon your father's house, your kin, for lo! a second call had come, as you did claim, from your sole and unseen God, and you must forth, not knowing whither, though five and seventy years lay like a burden on your back! I followed you; I too had been deluded by the tale, and strove for like faith in your lonely God. Ten years now have I braved the fury of great Bel, Ishtar, the Moon-god Sin! What then? Evil trailed evil! Pharaoh spewed me forth! The hosts of Asshur consumed me! War scattered my flocks and ravished the city of my adoption! In chains I followed the chariot of Kudur-Lagamar, till chance delivered me to you—only now to learn that Amraphel, Arioch, and Tidal, King of the Goyim, bearing the standards of Bel, are gathering at the valley's mouth to hurl themselves upon us and by my death or bondage avenge the insults which you have heaped upon their deities!"

He drew nearer and thrust his face upward. A sneer curled his thin lips, and his eyelids drew into narrow slits. "Say now what *you* have done these ten years so filled with

wrath, O Abu-ramu, you who believe yourself appointed by the God of your imagination to father a mighty race!"

In the brief interval of silence that followed this taunt, the great figure of the patriarch stood like the terebinth in Hebron, beneath whose massive shade he long had taught his people. Then his head inclined, and his dark eyes gleamed as he made reply: "I have been proving my faith in the only living and true God."

For a moment his auditor stood abashed at the unexpected reply. Then, to cover his confusion, he threw back his head and broke into a low laugh. "And doubtless it is proof of your God's great wisdom that you have come hither, rather than by the coastal road to the fair cities of Egypt."

"Doubtless," was the astonishing reply.

"And what did your sole and unseen God bid you seek here?"

"A city with foundations."

"Foundations! What means your riddle? Cities are not built upon the sand!"

The patriarch's thought seemed to cloud, and he hesitated. For a moment he looked yearningly into the face of his companion, then turned and walked slowly to the tent door, where he stood striving to pierce the night.

Without, all was quiet under that tense calm which, snapping, lets fall the barriers that restrain the storm. Lights moved fitfully; guards paced their beats softly and with straining ears; feral sounds and low talking floated on the heavy mist; a fretful child cried, and its tired mother, but recently a captive, sought to give it comfort; above, as the clouds parted, Orion drove the fleeting Pleiades across the vaulted sky. The patriarch smote his bosom with his clenched fists, and a cry escaped his trembling lips: "O that I knew where I might find him! That I might come even to his seat!"

He turned expectantly and met the questioning eyes of his adopted son. "Your God, you mean?" the latter asked. "Search then your fertile imagination! Or," he pursued in somewhat gentler tones, as he noted the troubled look in the other's face, "do you now seek more substantial aid? A warrior, perhaps the king of that city with foundations, to succor us. . ."

"I seek . . ." The patriarch hesitated. Then, quickly: "I seek the type of that King of Peace, who shall come from the heir whom God will give me."

Lot's eyes widened and his mouth gaped. Then he stooped and took up the fallen robe and tossed it over his shoulders. "I waste words," he said impatiently. "Your thought is not upon our common danger, but wantons still with your strange

delusion. The darkest hour of night is come, and Shaul awaits. Once more, will you leave your dreary prospect?"

Abram shook his head. "My task is not accomplished by fleeing from it," he said.

"I but counsel you to lay off your too heavy burden and seek safety and peace in Egypt. Ah, Egypt, playground of the gods! Think, O my father, what delights to the eye, the ear, the touch. . ."

"Evil undestroyed would pursue me, as it will you, O Lot, my blinded son. I will meet it here."

"Then to the God of your fancy I commend you, my father, and, even as between Beth-El and Hai we separated without strife, so do we now."

He drew his robe about him and started toward the exit. Abram in silence extended an arm and held the skin aloft. Lot stopped before him, crossed his hands over his bosom, and stood for a moment with bowed head. Then he went quickly out into the night.

A light breeze sweeping across Ephraim from the north drove the mists toward the wilderness. The insect voices of the night were hushed. The lonely patriarch's gaze instinctively sought the now clear heavens, and he stood sunken in thought.

Doubtless as he stood his mind turned back to distant days in Ur, the birthplace of the tribe of Heber. Doubtless he saw himself again on that wondrous night when, yearning for truth, and striving to see creative intelligence in moon or stars, it first dawned upon his honest thought that not these, but the invisible Power that had created them, demanded his reverence. Doubtless he now recalled how this simple revelation had transformed him; how zeal to know and serve that unseen One became at once his life-motif. Loathing for the vices of those among whom he dwelt had long filled him. Now he had denounced the worship of their idols and called upon the Lord, in primitive demonstration of his new and better way of thinking, to save him from the infant sacrifice and religious obscenity of his fellow men.

Abram knew that his fallow mind had not been the first to be touched by knowledge of the true God; he knew that, since time began, the Creator had not left Himself without a witness. But when men multiplied, and tribes and whole nations migrated, the pouring of peoples into the fertile Mesopotamian valley had given rise to a great confusion of tongues and exchange of ideas and their material manifestation. Knowledge of the One God—priceless heritage from such pure souls as Noah, Enoch, and those who, having responsive aptitudes

to the divine thought, received and translated the spiritual message, and thus "walked with God"—became obscured by the mental mist that rose from material ways of thinking. The atmosphere of Ur grew noxious with idolatrous associations. Men became slaves of their own lusts. The divine vision faded, and lessons drawn from the dire consequence of evil thought, which the wise had read in floods and cataclysms, ceased to be heard or heeded. The curve of ancient world morality had reached its lowest cusp, when Abram heard a voice that he knew was not of man.

As the Nazarene, twenty centuries later, unerringly sensed his calling, so Abram doubtless felt the irresistible impulse that comes from a great conviction. And he must have felt it, not as a promise, but a responsibility, a demand that he leave all and, depending alone on his Creator, set out from idolatrous Ur to begin his long period of preparation. He fared forth "as one who drinketh up scoffing", unmindful of taunt or persecution, but following his spiritual judgment with a devotion to the things of God that in time must render him one through whom great deeds would be accomplished.

The first demand upon him had been that of simple obedience. And he had met it promptly. The material reward was great prosperity, for in Haran the tribe of his father, Terah, waxed rich and powerful. But the real reward to Abram was the passing from his thought of every trace of the old religious superstition, and a further preparation for his destiny by the gradual recognition of his God as not merely the sole Creator, but the infinite moral Governor of the universe. This greater mental awakening, which constituted his second "call," flowered when Terah's death severed the last link that held the family together.

In the working out of his salvation Abram doubtless had seen the necessity of freedom from old and hampering associations. In Haran he had "gotten souls," had converted many to his monotheistic views. With these and his adopted son Lot, and

> "—after him a cumbrous train
> Of herds and flocks, and numerous servitude—
> Not wandering poor, but trusting all his wealth
> With God, who called him—"

he "went out, not knowing whither he went," following a vision that, through contemplation and consecrated devotion, had taken on a larger meaning. By the world's standards he had nothing to gain and all to lose in thus wrenching himself loose from Haran. But obedience implies sacrifice. And

sacrifice is surrender. In this he saw a new command of God that must be obeyed. The further from home he wandered, the closer would he draw to God; the less he depended upon his fellows, the more he would cling to the everlasting arm, which he believed would uphold him. Doubtless, too, he saw that to hang back at this juncture would be fatal to that long-nourished conviction—itself based on a revelation that to his sensitized and responsive spirit may have been literally a "voice"—that an heir would be given him, through whom something of greatest import to the unregenerate human race would come.

But ten years had already spent themselves upon him since leaving Haran, and the childless man who stood yearning at the tent door still patiently awaited the fulfilment of what had come to him as a promise. Temptations dire had assailed him; fear had driven him into errors which human history would for all time charge against his God; friends had scoffed and fallen away, and scant sympathy was meted by his nearest kin. Yet he stood—and on this portentous night more alone than ever—alone in his hopes, abandoned to his motives, but a witness to the stupendous truth destined ultimately to conquer every false system and form the basis of the one demonstrable religion, the truth that *God is One.* He had once before torn himself from his beloved Lot, at Bethel, that the selfish materialist might enjoy the richest of the pasture lands; yet now when the banded Syrian kings swooped down upon the five cities of Arabah and bore Lot into captivity, the faithful Abram had hastily armed his clan, allied himself with the hosts of the Amorite brothers, Mamre, Aner, and Eshcol, and hurried to his rescue. In the years of solitary contemplation of his better concept of God beneath the starry skies of Canaan he had learned the value of blessing them that despitefully used him. This ominous night, returning from the rescue of Lot from the hands of the idolatrous Kudur-Lagamar, a further demand for sacrifice of self had been promptly met; but the lonely patriarch still stood firm in purpose and determination to follow to the end his mighty spiritual venture. . .

He turned quickly, as sounds of a commotion rose through the night. A moment later a runner, naked but for a loincloth, and dripping with perspiration and the mist, dashed breathlessly up to the tent and sank at the patriarch's feet.

"*Shalat* . . . the adversary . . . approaches!"

Lights were springing up in all parts of the camp; there were shouts and cries of command and alarm; the sound of a Chaldean *keren* rent the air, followed by prolonged taboring. Before the patriarch could speak a second and a third runner arrived at the tent.

"Host after host is against us, *O Shalat!* From the mouth of the valley they are swarming like bees!"

"Like a cloud of locusts they will come! They are forming to the attack!"

The blazing camp was now awhirl. Men of war feverishly donned helmet and buckler and reached for the ready javelin; archers strung their bows and threw their quivers upon their backs; "servants" directed the gathering of munitions, of darts and slings, of mauls and axes; "rulers of his chariots and his horsemen" hurried the harnessing of the pawing steeds, while "princes" and captains shouted orders and rushed the preparations for desperate defense.

"My son!" The patriarch's thought had turned to Lot, who, abandoning all else, had sought personal safety in flight. So might he have done . . .

"What is man that thou shouldest try him every moment?" he murmured, with a quick glance upward to the fading stars. "But He is one Mind, and who can turn Him?"

Then his great frame became suddenly animate, and command chased command from his lips. Facing the menace of swift destruction from organized evil, the patriarch became at once the powerful *sheikh*, the natural head of the confederacy of Mamre, Aner, and Eshcol, and spiritual leader of the army of the righteous. The various tribal chiefs were hurriedly summoned to his tent; directions were issued and quickly borne to the farthest limits of the camp; the dynamic presence of the great director moved like a tower of strength, from which radiated courage, hope, and determination. Scarce had the exhausted runners unburdened their dread news when the striking of tents began; and soon the cattle and flocks, the women and children, the wounded and infirm, were moving swiftly down the valley, surrounded by lumbering carts and staggering burden bearers, while horsemen and chariots followed in the rear, leaving a strong detachment behind to meet the shock of the oncoming hordes. Songs and chants rose from the souls whom Abram had gotten. And ever and anon from the patriarch's lips as he rode among them came the assertion of his own strong faith . . .

> "In heaven, who is supreme? Thou alone, thou art supreme!
> On earth, who is supreme? Thou alone, thou art supreme!"

In the east the first tints of dawn had begun to glorify the long crest of Gilead. On the soft morning breeze came, faintly borne, a rushing sound, swelling steadily to a dull roar. Min-

gling with the thud of hoofs and the whir of flying chariots, as if in mocking reversal of Abram's chant of faith, echoed the Elamite hymn of hate:

> "O Ishtar, turn thou our hearts to hate! To plot against thy foes, the hosts of Heber! Give hail for rain! Flaming fire in their land! Strike their vine and fig tree, and break the trees on their border! Let locusts and yeleqs come upon them without number! Let thistles grow instead of wheat, and cockle for barley! Turn their water into blood and kill their fish! Smite them, O Ishtar, and bring thy chosen ones in exultation to their lands! Curse them, O Ishtar, and smite them with blindness and disease!"

A captain dashed up to the patriarch. "Look back, *O Shalat,*" he shouted, "where our warriors give way before them! Hear the enemy's joyous shouts!"

The leader moved not his head, but rode steadily forward. "The triumphing of the wicked is short," he made reply, "and the joy of the godless is but for a moment."

"But thou hast miscalculated, *O Shalat!*" cried the captain. "They are like the grains of dust! And we so few in number!"

"One with Him is a host, O son."

The tribal leaders, now overwhelmed with fear, came pressing about the patriarch. "We are lost, *O Shalat!*" they cried. "Thou hast misled us sore!"

Fear surged like a tidal wave over the pursued. Panting fugitives from the "shock troops" left behind were beginning to overtake the van. Women strained their babes to their bosoms and broke into wailing and wringing of hands. Despairing horsemen, unable to curb their fear, wheeled and spurred their steeds toward the distant hills; others fled to the river. . .

"This way, *O Shalat!*"

"To the mountains! Turn, *O Shalat,* or thy life . . ."

"He knoweth the way that I take," came from the patriarch. Panic and rout were imminent, yet for him the issue lay with his God.

The sun was now streaming garishly over the steaming plain. The driven hosts of Abram stumbled and drooped. Vultures hung expectantly above them. The adversary drew on with a roar, in a whirling cloud of dust. Chants, cries, shouts, and yells of despair and defiance, of pain, of hatred, filled the morning air. Warriors dropped, and were ground into the earth by a thousand hoofs. Abram's straining eyes were fixed upon the farther limit of the plain, where the moun-

tains again draw close to form the valley of the Kidron, once known as "Shaveh, which is the king's dale." Arrows from the great bows of the skirmishers of the nearing enemy were already falling around him. Their fiendish yells of victory smote his ears. Still his gaze held to the distant prospect, where through the swirling dust something glittered in the mist-laden sun . . .

"Curse them, *O Ishtar,* and smite them with blindness and disease!" yelled the adversary, as he closed in to the slaughter.

Abram raised a hand to shade his eyes. "I know that my Redeemer liveth, and at last he will stand upon the earth!" was his murmured reply to the curse of evil.

Then a cry broke from his dry lips. The dust-cloud fell from before him, and a dazzling reflection, as from a vast expanse of shining mail, of bronze chariots and polished spears, broke upon his eager sight. Mamre, the Amorite, came galloping to his side.

"Dost thou see it too, O my father? Behold, in the distance! They come! They *come!*"

Down from the hillsides and along the valley rolled a glittering throng, like a sea of molten silver. The spent warriors of Abram saw it and halted, with eyes bursting and mouths agape. Then, at the command of their great leader, they sent up a wild shout and turned as a man upon their pursuers. The surprised Elamites jerked back their steeds in their hot tracks until harness snapped and wheel crunched upon wheel, but their momentum carried them onward and left them impaled upon a sea of spears. Chariots and horsemen piled high in a frenzied, struggling, suffocating mass. Yells of terror burst from the remnant in the rear who saw, with bulging eyes, the shining hosts in the distance pouring down upon them. They reined about, turned again, as if unbelieving, to see the oncoming flood, then wheeled and fled wildly up the valley whence they had come. The exhausted hosts of Abram sank to the ground and waited. Only the patriarch, with a small retinue of tribal chieftains, rode out to meet the legions that had risen before them, as it seemed, out of the earth.

But soon the patriarch reined his horse and hastily dismounted. The tribal chieftains immediately followed the example of their leader. Mamre, the Amorite, turned to his brothers and spoke in awed tones. "Have you marked, O my brothers, how this oncoming host has diminished in number? I thought them numerous as the sands of the desert. . ."

"And I," gasped Aner, staring before him in astonishment.

"And, behold," cried Eshcol, "they come unarmed! Yet I swear their spears and shields glistened in the sun when first I marked them!"

Others of the chieftains drew together and whispered low, as they gazed in amazement at the approaching strangers. Only Abram seemed unmoved by surprise. Instead, his eyes were fixed reverently upon the majestic figure, clad in white robes and mounted upon a white steed of wondrous size and beauty, who rode alone at their head.

"God only is supreme!" the patriarch breathed. And his hands trembled as he crossed them over his bosom.

The advancing throng came swiftly, some in glittering chariots, some mounted on prancing horses, some afoot, with songs on their lips, with banners afloat, with taboring, and blowing of pipes and horns. Many held earthen jars upon their shoulders; some bore well-filled wine-skins upon their backs; others carried burdens of bread, of meats, of fruits. Abram moved slowly forward and knelt on the ground, awaiting their leader.

The latter drew rein and extended his arms before him. "Peace be unto you and yours, O Abram," he called in a voice as gentle as the morning breeze, "in the name of the only living and true God."

"To Whom be honor and glory for ever more, O Melchisedec, Prince and Priest of the Most High," reverently returned the patriarch.

Exclamations broke from the hosts of Abram. *"Patesi!"* they gasped. "Prince and king!"

The radiant leader dismounted and came to where Abram knelt. "Rise, O friend of God," he said, stooping over him.

Abram clasped the extended arms and rose to his feet. Then Melchisedec placed his hands on the patriarch's shoulders and kissed him tenderly on both cheeks.

Tears coursed freely down the patriarch's face. "Thou callest me by name, O Priest of Elion," he spoke in quavering tones; "thou comest to meet me, sore pressed by evil. . ."

"Long have I known you, O Abram," said the other. "For since first you entered Chna I have watched, through many eyes, the ripening of that rare *faith* which now must fructify in *knowledge*. I saw your flying hosts pass to the north to rescue Lot, unworthy son and nephew! from the servants of false Bel. I knew when, withstanding strong temptation to take the path of safety back to Egypt, you did choose to come this hazardous way."

"Because of thee, O great Melchisedec! Long have I sought thee, for thou . . ." His voice sank as he continued. "Thou canst point me to that city with foundations."

"Which is the true understanding of God, O Abram," the other gently answered. "And by faith you reach it. By faith

already you have learned that such understanding is possible to man. Know now that it is the city which God has prepared for you and these," extending an arm toward Abram's people, "who have seen the promise afar off and have been persuaded to embrace it. But, come, pitch now your tents, O Abram, and rest and comfort your wearied people," he went on. "Nor fear a return of the fleeing adversary, whom but to face with strong faith in God was to drive headlong in rout. So always with evil."

Abram turned and gave a sign. This was instantly transmitted by his Damascene steward Eliezer, and immediately the host set about pitching camp. An awning was quickly erected, and beneath its shade Abram and his guest disposed themselves to await the ordering of the camp.

Of the status of the mysterious being who sat conversing with him, it was apparent that Abram had been but dimly apprised; for, while he had diligently sought him, driven by an impulse which he had believed divine, yet conflicting rumor had mingled with tales of the Canaan plains to cast a haze over his name and veil his person in myth. Nor is it strange that in that day of dense materialism, so manifest in obscene rites of worship of wood and stone, of planet, star, and the ghosts of fear and every evil, individuals of the pattern of Melchisedec should not be truly comprehended by groveling, sin-stained mortals.

Yet they dwelt among men, sacred and mysterious, even before the day of Abram—dwelt on earth as the great administrators of justice such as they believed God Himself would have it. Monotheists they were, and kings of righteousness and peace that as far transcended human understanding then as now. And the greatest of these was the stately Melchisedec, kingly priest and priestly king, clear-seeing, never faltering, spiritually-minded servant of the One God, and type of that greater Priest who would one day come as a sinful world's Messiah.

"I heard of thee in Egypt," Abram resumed, now lost to the bustling activity around him, where tents rose and preparations for rest and ministration went busily on. "For, though I sought corn against the famine, yet my true mission was with Egypt's priests, that I might give them knowledge of the One God in place of their imaginary deities. There I learned of thee; there I saw that mighty witness to God—though none could decipher it nor name it aught but Khufu's tomb. Yet even those idolatrous priests did admit that thou, whom Prince Philition they called, a 'shepherd king,' didst peacefully subdue warlike Egypt, cause great Khufu to close the idol temples

and wait with reverence whilst this great altar should rise to witness for all time to Him who is God alone. Yet some say that the purpose of this mighty pillar shall remain unrecognized throughout the ages, that its message may be read in the last days, long hence, when it shall confound the evil unbelief of those distant future times."

"Misunderstand me not, O Abram," was the grave reply. "The eternal God is never without witness. See in that pillar, known as Khufu's tomb, a prophecy, a symbol of eternal justice, of all mortal belief laid to the plummet; but forget not that all things material must pass away, whilst God and His image shall alone remain. Seek ye then but the spiritual; abandon your belief that things of matter can have substance, life; quit now your fear that evil can have power, since that belief, contesting with your faith that God is All, keeps the lion ever roaring by your tent. Could our omnipotent God create a power against Himself?

"Then listen well: the mighty El has called you. How? He sent His angel—a thought divine, an impulse pure—which bade you cease the worship of the thing created and reverence Him who made all that of which this universe material is but the symbol crude. And you did yield obedience. Then followed angel after angel, and formed an ever better concept within you of the true and only God. The spiritual bidding to leave the idolatrous environment in which you dwelt brought with it faith that God would care for you while seeking Him. O Abram, the steps that lead up to that city which you seek are these: pure thought, pure concept, pure impulse, obedience, faith, then understanding, which is the reward, for rightly to know Him is life eternal."

"How rightly to know Him is what I seek, O Priest and King," answered Abram. "And when I learned from Egypt's reluctant priests how thou didst so project new, strange, and abstract ideas into sluggish human minds that, without employ of arms, without slaughter, violence, or force, thou didst lay all Egypt, from Khufu down, beneath thy spell beneficent—ah, then I knew that thy idea of God was far more perfect than mine own, and I must seek from thee to learn of Him."

Melchisedec raised his arms and extended them toward Abram. "Blessed be Abram of the Most High God, possessor of heaven and earth," he said in a voice of great solemnity. "And blessed be the Most High God, who has delivered your enemies into your hand."

"They fled when thou didst burst upon their sight. . ."

"Not so, O Abram. Came we with arms, or in great numbers? No. What saw the adversary then? Naught but

what his own fears personified. He fled before his vision of Omnipotence. Your enemies, O Abram, are but your human fears, and thoughts not based on Truth. These your God has delivered into your hands."

"The scales drop from mine eyes, O Priest of God!" cried Abram in great animation. "But say further now: our father Enoch, he who left our midst, and was not . . ."

"He learned, what all mankind must some day know, that God is Spirit and is One. That Spirit is the sole Creator; and His Creation is not formed of dust, but made the eternal image of His perfect Self. So Enoch saw all evil, sin, the things of matter, death itself, as but the formless mist that seems at dawn to rise to oppose the sun, but flees before it and dissolves and is no more. Thus grounded on immovable Truth, he loosed his mortal bonds, o'ercame the false beliefs that limit all mankind, and so focused the sharp rays of Truth omnipotent upon his seeming self that it dissolved and vanished quite from human view. Thus doing, he walked with God and passed, without death, unto a consciousness of life eternal. Thus all mankind must do to live."

Long they talked, and Abram sat at the Master's feet absorbed. Meantime, the tents were spread in favored spots, and tables laden with unleavened cakes, clotted cream, flesh of kid and calf, and fruits of many kinds. Then Abram rose and led Melchisedec to his own tent. There he bade him sit, while he ungirt himself and from a silver laver washed the feet of his distinguished guest. Then Melchisedec called his servants, who set out the bread and wine which they had brought, as symbols of the spiritual gifts which will always follow the purifying of thought.

"From your own land of the Accadians," he said, "comes wheat, which mortals call the staff of life. Know, O Abram, that each thing of Spirit must seem to have its counterpart in human thought. So wheat originated in that land whence first came human man, as the counterpart material of the revelation of Truth as Life, the revelation that came to you that God is One."

The day declined, and long shadows stole across the plain. Low singing rose from the women's tents, where grateful mothers crooned and drowsed over sleeping babes. Peace crept down from the empurpled hills and enveloped the quiet camp. Cattle munched their grain in deep content. Warriors stretched out their tired limbs, while the memory of strife and strain, of wounds and harassed flight, faded with the waning day and passed into night.

"The command has come, O Abram: 'Thou shalt have no

other Elohim before me'," said Melchisedec, as he rose. "And it must sift you, sift you, sift you, till every human support shall fall, and you shall stand on Truth as God alone."

"And what is Truth?" asked Abram.

"That *God is All,*" came the quick reply.

Then Melchisedec drew nearer and laid his hands again upon the shoulders of Abram. "What down the corridors of time I see, I may not tell you," he said, "for as yet you rest more on faith than understanding. Yet through faith are you made heir to the Word. Because of this shall come your trial. Gird up now thy loins, for He shall demand of thee on what thine understanding rests, if it be Spirit, or its shadowy opposite, matter. Unto you are committed the oracles of God. For this, all nations shall seek to slay you, thinking thereby to kill the Word. But thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies. Through you, obedient, shall the covenant with death be annulled. I see, far off, the day of restitution, when the mists of matter shall roll away and reality shall appear. This, O Abram, shall come through *him* who comes through you."

As quietly, even mysteriously, as they had appeared, so went the hosts of Melchisedec with their great priest and king. Abram stood long, alone, lost in reverent contemplation of the events of that strange day. And as he stood, his steward approached.

"A runner, O Abu-ramu, who brings tidings that the king of Sodom is encamped at the mouth of the valley, and will wait on thee at dawn. Meantime, he begs that thou wilt consider delivering to him but his people, whom thou hast rescued, and keep thyself the goods."

Abram raised a hand. "Not a thread, not a shoelatchet, will I take, lest he say 'I have made Abram rich,' when great Melchisedec alone has brought me wealth of the Spirit that cannot be measured! Go, O Eliezer, divide the portions to Aner, Eshcol, and Mamre, and command the runner to return to the king of Sodom and bid him wait without."

Eliezer departed. Abram stood for a moment, wrestling with the disturbing worldly thoughts which the messenger of Sodom's king had aroused; then he went to the tent door and raised the skin. A cry escaped him as his eyes fell upon Lot, who stood there bowed in humility and shame. Abram gathered his nephew in his arms and strained him to his breast.

"O father, I have deeply sinned against you and your God," fell faltering from the prodigal's lips.

"It is naught, my son!" cried the rejoicing Abram. "God is supreme! God is good! Enter, my beloved son! O Eliezer!" he called. "Food and raiment!" Then again to Lot: "But tell me, whence come you and how?"

Lot entered the tent and sank upon the rugs. "I watched the battle from the hills," he said in a low, penitent voice. "I saw the Elamites swoop down upon you like swift vultures from the clouds. And then . . . then . . . I know not what I saw . . . but a throng, numerous as the stars in heaven, that rose against them! And they fled! I stood transfixed. Then shame smote me. I could not go on. Back I crept . . . and saw that wondrous man who came as God to deliver you! O Abu-ramu, your God is great! The false gods of Bel have failed. I follow them no more, but, if you will, shall go with you, even to the end."

The father of future Israel, keeper of the Word, bowed his head. "Adonai, Jah-Hovah," he murmured. "Thou plural *One!*"

The wind had fallen, the clouds had dropped below the horizon, and the stars were shining in undimmed glory when the girl raised her head. "I . . . have seen . . . a . . . *vision!*" she murmured in a voice of awe.

"You have heard a prophecy," answered the other with a smile. "A prophecy that deeply concerns you."

There was a new light in the girl's big eyes as they looked into those of the woman.

THOU ISRAEL

BOOK 1

THOU sayest, I am rich and increased with goods and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked. . .

—*Revelation.*

THOU ISRAEL

CHAPTER 1

THE chime-master sat back and wiped his perspiring face. Just what had happened he could not say, but whenever he pressed the key that operated the great tenor bell an angry, metallic snarl burst from the tower above and rode down the wind with a jangling echo as of crashing tinware. He bent forward and began again. He tried to play around that key, but it seemed to possess a fatal fascination for him. In *"Our God Our Help in Ages Past"* he struck it repeatedly; and each time the uncanny sound set his taut nerves more keenly aquiver, until at length a nervous chill swept over him and his hands froze to the keyboard. Then, with the hymn unfinished, he rose, shivering, and hurried up the stairway to the bell-loft.

Without, in the raw air, the members of the Crestelridge Anglican Church of St. Jude—the Reverend Wilson Whittier, priest and rector—paused for a moment on alighting from their high-powered cars to throw a questioning glance upward at the tower. Then they drew their furs closer and hurried up the steps. In the warm vestibule the unctuous ushers met them with smiling reassurance.

"Something sounds cracked up there . . . Oh, good morning, Mrs. Tellus! Didn't know you were back from Florida. How were the links . . .?"

"Fair . . . But my doctor wouldn't let me play much. It's my heart, you know."

" 'Fraid you came back too soon. We're having the most abominable weather. Rain, fogs . . . Everybody's got a cold. I've had pleurisy something awful!"

"What's wrong with the chimes?" someone put in. "They're just new."

"Oh, Mrs. Kerl! So glad to see you. Yes, just installed. But a bell may have been defective . . . Oh, I say, Mr. Dick, is one of the bells cracked?"

The chime-master emerged through the tower door and closed it carefully behind him. There was a peculiar expression on his face. "Yes," he said, "the Cragg Memorial."

Throughout the marble foyer silks rustled and delicate odors of costly perfumes rose like incense through the warm air. Sartorially perfect males paused to exchange tempered greetings, to voice a remark on the market, or to drop a casual comment on the rather important fact that, with Russia now prostrate, and France no longer able to launch a general offensive, the burden must fall upon England. The economic effect . . .

Some listened; few commented; some turned to the tablets on either side of the central entrance and read anew the names of pew-holders cast in the bronze—read them with a piquant satisfaction in seeing themselves thus immortalized among the gentility of Crestelridge.

Within the auditorium, in the soft-cushioned mahogany pews, ermine and mink lay draped back in perfect good taste from plump shoulders, whilst monogrammed lorgnettes boldly swept neighbor and stranger for identity and caste. The Whittier pew, which stood at right angles to the others and just under the pulpit, was as yet unfilled; and there was a glint of amusement in the eyes of those who knew that the morning worship would not begin until Mrs. Whittier had arrived and ushered her two strangely dissimilar daughters up the long aisle and into the family pew. And from long observation the wiseacres knew that this would not occur until the congregation were seated and to the proper degree anticipant.

About the chancel altar-boys and acolytes glided softly, giving the final touches to the preparations for the complicated "High Church" service. And ever as they passed before the ornate altar they paused and bowed in reverent obeisance before the Host. Their activities diverted the assembling audience until a slight commotion in the vestibule, accompanied by a modest raising of voices in chaste greetings, caused the lorgnettes to be focused upon the central doorway, through which the well-groomed figures of two men, in gray gloves and spats, were entering the auditorium in the perfumed wake of an usher. The older man was short, stout, and bald but for a fringe of thick gray hair that encircled his shining dome like the timber-line below a naked peak. His fleshy face was riant with glad content; but it was a kindly face, and it lighted with animation as he nodded right and left, or stopped for a moment to press an extended hand and exchange a whispered word. His companion, a young man of about thirty, was tall and splendidly set up, with unusually broad shoulders and a

well-shaped head crowned by abundant brown hair. But his face, though in profile good, was sensuous, and appeared to lack the strength that his body symbolized. And the small, close-set eyes were of the type that too readily narrow and freeze into bits of sharp, glittering steel.

Mrs. Tellus, resplendent in the sheen of satin and a distractingly seductive hat, leaned close to her husband. "Senator Chaddock's up from Washington, Henry."

"Business with the Craggs, I suppose," responded her spouse. "Besides, his son's going to join the church . . ."

"Harris Chaddock? My word!"

"Well, why not? It'll help his business. Wealthy clientele. He'll have Roake's practice some day, and . . . But for heaven's sake sit up! You're sprawled all over me!"

The lorgnettes were now turning from the Chaddocks to the next arrivals of importance. The tall figures of the Craggs, mother and son, moved slowly up the aisle with the superb dignity and fine suppression of power with which a dreadnaught glides to its dock. At the entrance to their pew, which was well toward the front, for Mrs. Cragg's sight was not strong, the son gently removed his mother's arm from his, stepped ahead of her, faced about, and, with a short bow and a slight extension of his arm, dignifiedly waved her in. She entered with the manner of a sovereign, looking to neither side, her face expressionless, her head rigidly erect. The son glanced over at the Whittier pew, then followed; and together they sat down, then knelt carefully upon the prayer-stool for a moment, with their foreheads touching the back of the seat ahead.

Through all entrances the auditorium was now filling; and more quickly and completely than usual, so it seemed to the wielders of the lorgnettes. Many visitors were noted—a few richly clad and imposing in appearance and manner; but most of them men, whose looks and bearing announced them from walks of life far below those which the favored communicants of St. Jude's trod. The former had been quickly taken in charge by the sedulous ushers and properly disposed; the latter were critically inspected—those were critical days around March, '17—and discriminatingly directed into the unrented pews in the rear and at the sides. Among these was a small party of Japanese men, solemn of visage and demeanor, and immaculate of garb. "Heathen," sighed Mrs. Tellus softly, as she lowered her jeweled lorgnette, "coming to the fount for the waters of life."

Lastly, when the stone corridors and vaulted dome had begun to vibrate with the heaven-born strains of Mozart's

Mass, came Mrs. Whittier, purposely a bit late. And as she pushed her two daughters into the pew and took her seat, half facing the congregation, and appeared to realize that, in the buzz of excitement occasioned by the presence of so many strangers that morning, her arrival had passed almost unnoticed, Mrs. Tellus wondered if the excellent lady would not go out and enter again, and with more of a stir.

"What a hypocrite that Marian Whittier is!" Mrs. Tellus leaned over and whispered to her husband. "To flaunt herself here in her father's church, when everybody knows how she opposes everything he says and does! She's certainly his cross!". . .

The first clarion notes of the processional had burst from the great organ, the full orchestra had crashed in with horn and drum, and the corridors were echoing the chant of the surpliced choir, drawing ever nearer. Some of the congregation knelt; but others, despite the impropriety, eagerly craned their necks and raised high their lorgnettes. For, they would have you know, the Reverend Wilson Whittier's religious services were decidedly worth-while spectacles, and one should keep one's eyes open. It was remarked that the Japanese leaned forward too, intent upon catching every detail; but the men from the lower walks of life sat stiffly erect and watched and waited—particularly a tall, thin man, poorly dressed, and with a shock of black hair and features that were unmistakably of Hebrew origin.

Down through the aisles over the rich velvet carpets the long procession now wended its way, enveloped in song. Before it, small surpliced lads marched with swinging incense burners. Cross-bearers followed, and others who bore aloft tapers and standards. Sub-deacons, deacons, and officers of various rank came after, with measured step, each modulating his voice to properly swell the processional chant. Lastly, in robes heavy with gold embroidery, came the priestly rector, the Reverend Wilson Whittier, mediator between a just God and His people assembled to make sacrifice. Acolytes surrounded him, and sub-deacons held his long robes up from the thickly carpeted floor. In his hand he bore a small silver aspersorium, with which from time to time he dipped holy water from a little silver pail and sprinkled it over the congregation.

A young girl who had sat with eyes riveted upon the pageant and ears throbbing with the thunderous roll of the organ, the blare of horns, and the full diapason of the vested choir, lost control of her mounting emotion and burst into sobs. Some heard her—some fur-clad and content—and turned and nodded their approbation. Some, whose problems rested lightly upon

them, smiled patronizingly. But there were others who turned not their heads, but held their eyes fixed upon the gorgeous procession. These were the men from life's lower walks. And among them sat the black-haired man with the Hebrew features, who looked hard at the Reverend Wilson Whittier with eyes that voiced a question unanswered by this elaborate show. And then, as the rector moved slowly by, the lips of this Hebrew parted, and a whispered exclamation escaped them. It was not meant to be heard, but the rector appeared to catch it, for he hesitated, and his head turned quickly, and a startled look came into his face. Then he went on; but those who held his robes marked that his step was become unsteady and that his hand shook.

Yet he knew, did the Reverend Wilson Whittier, that it was not the whispered comment of a disaffected Jew that caused his agitation. To his confessor he would have said that it was a sudden fear that, despite his frenzied efforts not to see it, his world *was* shaking, his feet slipping . . . slipping. . .

"Just a little bilious touch, my dear," his wife would explain it. "You eat too many hothouse cantaloup. See Doctor Roake and get fixed up."

He clutched his wits and dragged them back to their task. But ever and anon during his conduct of the long and elaborate ritual his eyes wandered out fearfully over his congregation, and his thought strayed into channels long forbidden. Out there sat the Blacks, the Kerls, the Telluses, and the Craggs. . . No need to tell him what thoughts were floating, like gnats in the summer sun, through *their* unresistant minds! He knew what anticipations of the social gaiety to be loosed by Easter. . . Yet the meaning of that sacred day was almost as obscure to him as to those fur-wrapped women, nestled out there in such warm content. He knew what schemes of barter those masks of piety hid, what profiteering by their brothers' needs. . . Yet—so he had always reasoned—to drive the money-changers from the temple meant closing the doors of salvation upon them, with the consequent loss of their souls. He knew that these, whose names were cast in bronze in the foyer beyond, boasted themselves the Sons of God; yet he was also being forced to know, fight it as desperately as he might, that mankind were but animals, of a species the most cruel and wanton that the earth has yet brought forth. He knew that these proud communicants of St. Jude's sat there before him as the triumph of common sense. In their silks and laces, their jewels and furs, he saw them the concrete refutation of the Christly notion of re-birth. Yet he

knew that they sat impotently facing the unknown, without chart or guide, save the empty symbolism which, like the necromancers of ancient Egypt, he was displaying before them. He knew that, sooner or later, each would struggle to the death with a sense of malevolent power, and go down beaten; yet he knew that now every one of them would instantly rise and argue loudly, angrily, for the reality and permanence of evil were its validity questioned. And so likewise would he, though he preached the omnipotence of God. In his heart of hearts he knew that morning—though he would not have expressed it thus—that they and he were traveling down that long, low passageway in Mizraim's great "altar" through which the star Draconis had sent his angry gleam some fifty centuries agone; nor would they turn and remount the slippery way until one regenerate should throw upon them the mantle of pure charity and love them . . . love them . . . *love* them . . . yes, as did that girl . . .

That girl! He shivered, and pulled his recalcitrant thought away from her, though he could not stay it. Then, far within the depths of his soul, a door opened, and from the foul blackness a leering skeleton came rattling out and seized his throat.

"You believe in God?"

"I . . . think so!"

"And there is nothing hid that shall not be revealed?"

"N-n-o!"

"Then let me go!"

And the hideous thing shook him till his head swam and his memory failed, and he had to be prompted by his amazed assistants—*that* morning, of all others, when his church held so many strangers within her gates! Consciousness of his environment returned. He mopped his wet brow and hurried the service to its end. Then he turned to the pulpit for the sermon.

It was his intention to announce briefly that morning his stand in respect to the threefold mission which, according to Holy Writ, the founder of the Christian religion had laid upon the Church. A joint committee had been appointed by various Protestant churches of Crestelridge to investigate the matter, with special reference to the mooted question of Christian healing, a question that—doubtless due to present extraordinary world-conditions—was now being pushed never so insistently to the fore. He had been invited to collaborate; he had hesitated, knowing that he could not well refuse, and yet fearful of giving offense. Then, after his interview with his assistant the preceding evening, his daughter Marian had come to him in the quiet of his study—and there had been a

most remarkable light in her eyes, he now recalled—and had persuaded him, quite against his own logic, to telephone an announcement to the Sunday newspapers to the effect that he would touch on that topic this morning. His thought hung again as he entered the pulpit stairway. Was *this* the cause of the greatly increased attendance at that service?

He mounted the steps and faced his congregation. For a moment he paused uncertainly; then, with a shiver, he plunged into his sermon. "I believe," he began, "in an infinite governing Power, as I am certain you do. I believe that this omnipotent Being has fashioned the visible body as well as the invisible and immortal soul, both created perfect, and . . ." He checked himself. ". . . both subject to decay," he was about to add, when his thought turned again to the girl. Preposterous lack of logic! *she* would say.

He hurried on, desperately resolved to forget the girl. "I believe, further, that this beneficent Father created heaven and earth, soul and body, spirit and matter. I believe spirit to be the ultimate of matter, and that in seeing matter we see spirit. I believe God's plan to include the spiritualizing of matter, and, just as we see the flesh of the infant slowly change into that of the adult, so shall the flesh of mortals pass, in God's wonderful plan, into the spiritual substance of angels."

He believed, he went on to say, as he knew they all did, that mental states in some measure influenced the body. Possibly these mental states could in some degree be controlled —although this, of course, as yet lacked scientific demonstration. Yet, could we say that healing was a function of such control? For, admitting that the Church had received the Saviour's admonition to heal, did not the innumerable Christian hospitals and Christian physicians now healing in the Master's name witness her obedience to this divine command? Besides, if he were to speak truth, there was much speculation as to whether this third injunction might not be a later interpolation, possibly of a third or fourth century copyist: it seemed so inconsistent. "At any rate," he argued, "granting that Jesus healed spiritually, likewise his apostles, it is no longer done, and we rightly question if it is *really* required. Earth, after all, is but the vestibule of heaven, where all is harmony. . . ."

Still, he added, he believed in the efficacy of prayer; believed that when science and the medical profession had pronounced a man incurable the sufferer should turn to his God. He knew of many cases where, after all the power of science had failed, God had seen fit to restore an afflicted one to health and strength. But—and this was the point he wished to

drive home—*too much stress must not be placed on physical healing, for then the world would follow Jesus merely for the loaves and fishes. . .*

He glanced toward his own pew and met the wondering eyes of his daughter Marian. Yes, he believed he approved the motive of the proposed "Union for Christian Healing." He believed the lost element of healing could be restored, although in doing so it might be necessary to depart somewhat from their strictly orthodox beliefs. . .

He looked down into the expressionless faces of the Craggs. Yes, he approved this proposed union, but provided always that sanity should direct its investigations. He had decided to attend its deliberations, and would report them fully to his congregation.

Then, with a sigh of relief—and yet with a feeling that he had somehow made a hodge-podge of it all—he stepped out onto firmer ground. The announcements of the coming week's church activities were many and important. New rules had been made regarding use of the swimming pool, and were posted in the foyer of the parish house. Also, the new cinder track was now open. As to meetings of the various social and welfare committees, there were many scheduled for the week. The Domestic Missions Society would meet at the home of Mrs. Cragg on Tuesday at three, and a paper on that vital topic would be read by the hostess herself. "The Lure of Africa" would be discussed by Mrs. Tellus at the meeting of the Foreign Missions League on Wednesday, and Dr. Harris Chaddock had kindly consented to speak briefly on "The Medical Missionary" at the same time. The Committee on Child Welfare would meet Thursday at four in the parish house, in which meeting Doctor Roake would discuss the modern treatment of children's diseases. There would be meetings of sewing circles, of the Domestic Science Committee, and of the visiting nurses. An important vestry meeting was also scheduled; and the numerous men's and boys' organizations would hold frequent business and social sessions throughout the very busy week.

The rector's confidence in himself increasingly returned during the quarter-hour that he devoted to these familiar matters; and when he had concluded with a final announcement of the unusually elaborate service to be held on Easter Sunday he felt quite recovered and ready for the brief explanation which the presence of so many strangers there seemed to render imperative as a preparation for the supreme sacrificial act of the "High" Anglican service which was now to follow.

In a few words he outlined the form of this service and

advanced reasons for its acceptance. "You *do* believe," he said in conclusion. Yet from the stolid expressions of those in the rear pews he felt that his words were scarcely convincing. He leaned far over the pulpit and spoke more vehemently. "You *know* you believe! When you see the wine and the wafer changed—here—into the real presence of the Christ, you *must* believe! And you shall see it . . ."

His voice trailed away; his hands clutched the sides of the pulpit; he stood, wide-eyed, lips apart, staring across the church. Someone had risen in the rear of the room and started down the center aisle.

Every head turned; lorgnettes went up; mouths gaped; some of the congregation half rose in their pews; ushers sprang to their feet and stood hesitant. The tall, thin figure came swiftly down the long aisle, with shoulders slightly bent and eyes fixed straight ahead. It was the shabbily dressed, black-haired man with the Hebrew features.

The bewildered rector made as if to speak; but his words froze. He looked off at the gaping ushers and nodded feebly. The latter started forward—but halted abruptly, for the Jew had gained the Cragg pew and slipped into it, where he composed himself and now sat quiet and expectant.

The congregation sank back and caught its breath. An ominous hush fell upon the auditorium. The rector stood for some moments as if stunned; then, trembling violently, he turned, gathered up his surplice, and descended the steps from the pulpit and moved haltingly across the chancel to the altar.

Again it was borne home to the Reverend Wilson Whittier that his world *was* shaking, his feet slipping. For the first time in his long career he felt that the venerable autocracy of wealth, of caste, of ecclesiastical dogma as impersonated by himself had met a challenge—felt that the long-deferred demand for demonstration was at last upon him, as it was the world over that hour upon all who claimed to speak with authority. Its embodiment sat there in that Jew, asserting his undoubted right to *know* and to *be*. In the rector's turbulent thought the complex ritual fused into a ridiculous medley that shaped insistently into

> "Orthodox! orthodox, who believe in John Knox,
> A heretic blast has been blown in the West. . ."

He turned at length, mechanically, to elevate the Host. The sea of faces swam before his eyes. Giddiness swept over him. His arms shook. He glanced helplessly down at his own pew, but saw only the accusing face of that strange girl, Marian, his daughter by adoption, and herself a protest and a prophecy.

He closed his eyes. Again the grinning skeleton came rattling from its inner chamber and seized him by the throat.

"You believe in God?"

"Yes! yes!"

"And there is nothing hid that shall not be revealed?"

"God help me! No!"

"Then loose me and let me *GO!*"

The salver left his hands and crashed to the floor. The sacred wafer bounded down the steps and rolled out into the aisle. The Jew sprang up and set his foot against it. Then he stooped and took it up.

Gasps and suppressed exclamations rose from the horrified congregation. The rector stood like an image of stone. The Jew, indifferent to the consternation around him, bent and closely studied the wafer in his palm. He turned it over. He crumpled a portion of it. He raised his head and swept the congregation with an inquiring look.

Then he stepped forward and handed the wafer up to the rector. An odd expression sat upon his bold features, and the corners of his mouth curled slightly. For a moment he stood, staring at the rigid priest. Then he turned and strode down the long aisle and out of the church.

CHAPTER 2

IT had been the Reverend Wilson Whittier's wont to change his vestments immediately after the service and hurry out to the main entrance to greet his friends and extend the hand of welcome to the day's visitors. But this morning, for the first time in years, he abandoned the practice and, instead, dragged himself into the sacristy and sank wearily into an armchair. Perturbed vestrymen, indignant parishioners, and sympathizing friends, together with the gossips and the merely curious, crowded after him into the room; but of his family, only one came to his side. Mrs. Whittier and daughter Ethel, consuming with chagrin, had slipped unnoticed through the corridor and into the adjoining rectory; Marian had hurried after the rector, and now stood with an arm about the trembling shoulders of the anguished man.

"Such impertinence!" gasped the scandalized Mrs. Black, wife of the packer.

"I want to say," blustered Kerl, of Kerl's Liver Pills fame, "that if I can't bring my wife and children to this church without exposing them to . . ."

"Does anybody know the fellow's name?" It was Alden Cragg speaking.

"I do," answered Mr. Tellus. "He is David Barach, a mechanic, a model-maker."

"Barach?" Mrs. Cragg echoed, and turning to her son. "Then he is one of our tenants."

"I know him," corroborated a vestryman. "He's a soapbox orator. . ."

"A disturber of the peace, a Jewish agitator!" put in another.

"He has been in my office," Mr. Tellus continued. "He is employed by our company."

"Employed by . . . ah . . . Primal Motors?" Alden Cragg asked, lifting his brows.

"Yes. He's a clever fellow, in a way. . ."

"Clever!" ejaculated Mrs. Cragg. "He's insane! To come to a house of worship, and create a vulgar disturbance!" . . .

"And yet, what did he do that was wrong?"

All eyes turned sharply upon Marian Whittier, who had propounded the startling question. Mrs. Cragg with difficulty suppressed a caustic rejoinder. The rector glanced up quickly at the girl, with a hurt look in his drawn face. Senator Chaddock alone met the challenge.

"It was not what he *did,*" he suggested, with the ease and self-assurance that come from years of training in legislative halls; "not so much what he actually *did,* as what his conduct portends. He publicly expressed his attitude toward the established order of society. And that attitude constitutes a menace."

"It constitutes a problem, Senator," Marian amended. "And an unsolved problem is always a menace. But *his* problem can be solved. He came here seeking."

Mrs. Cragg drew herself up and threw her son a significant glance. "Did he come here seeking to proclaim his equality by crowding into our pew in that defiant manner?" she demanded, frowning upon the girl.

"I doubt if he knew he was in your pew. He was absorbed. . ."

"I cannot but think his conduct was deliberate," murmured the suffering rector.

"Really, Marian, you are not defending this . . . this *Jew?*" Alden Cragg exclaimed in a shocked tone.

"She certainly appears to be, Alden," came quickly from his mother, in pursuance of her life-long habit of making certain that every word uttered by her son should receive immediate attention.

The girl faced her questioner. "Yes, Alden, I am."

"Marian!" The rector started up, but sank back with a groan. "Spare me now!" he moaned.

"That man's life has reached a crisis," the girl went on earnestly. "He came here seeking—as he had a perfect right to do. He did not find. It irritated him—and rightly."

Muffled gasps rose throughout the room. Significant nods were exchanged among the vestry. There was an expressive and definitive toss of Mrs. Cragg's proud head. Mrs. Tellus' seductive hat rocked back and forth, indicative of the final corroboration of a suspicion long nourished. A portentous silence of some moments followed. Then Mr. Tellus again spoke.

"It seems to me," he said deliberately, and choosing his words with evident care, "that this is a matter for the vestry alone to consider. . ."

"We won't have a promiscuous lot of strangers butting in here and crowding us out of our pews, Tellus!" Kerl interrupted blatantly.

"Surely not. But there is, I think, something more important to be considered just now." He paused and glanced quizzically at Marian Whittier, then turned again to the others. "The erratic conduct of this Jew is disturbing, I admit; but what is much more disturbing to me is an influence which for some time has seemed to be directed against our rector from quite another source. I suggest that we members of the vestry meet informally at once to consider it. The others will please leave. And let me request you all to be *most* discreet in what you say about this morning's unpleasant affair."

"Before we go," Dr. Harris Chaddock put in, pushing his way aggressively forward, "I want to ask Father Whittier for a definite statement about this 'Union for Christian Healing.' I didn't know the church was backing such an idea; and as I am about to join, I'd naturally like to know what I am subscribing to."

A murmur of interest arose. "He's perfectly right," someone whispered. "What would Doctor Roake say?" came from another. The rector looked up quickly at Marian, then turned his appealing eyes upon Mr. Tellus. The latter gentleman responded at once. "That is also a matter for the vestry to determine, Harris," he said, addressing young Chaddock. "We will take care of it and advise you fully." With which he waved them all out and stood to close the door behind them.

The Craggs and the Chaddocks left together. Mrs. Tellus gathered up some friends to drop at their apartments and noisily herded them out. The others dispersed quickly, whis-

pering speculatively over the interesting events of the morning as they passed down through the marble corridors.

"Take the car and drive on, Harris," the senator bade his son at the curb. "I will go with Mrs. Cragg and Alden. They will leave me at my hotel. See you at dinner." He turned and gallantly assisted Mrs. Cragg into her limousine, exchanged a word with the liveried chauffeur, then followed. "Dear, dear!" he sighed, sinking into the luxurious cushions, "what perplexing days these are, to be sure! Time was when we always knew *just* what to do. Nowadays we merely flounder; our minds are always confused. What an awful muddle our poor dear rector got into!"

Mrs. Cragg's impatience snapped its leash. "What brings you up from Washington, Senator?" she demanded. Her usually imperious voice quavered strangely.

The senator glanced about before replying, as if fearing to be overheard. Then, in a low tone: "Your interests solely, Madam." He turned to the son. "Have you decided to go to Spain, Alden?" he asked.

The young man started and shivered slightly. His attention had been riveted upon a billboard bearing a huge recruiting poster. The burning eyes of Kitchener seemed to scorch him; the long, accusing finger, pointing straight at him, singled him out of a million others; the flaring caption in great red letters: *Your King And Your Country Need YOU!* fairly shouted at him.

"Er . . . No, sir . . . Fact is, I'm going to yield to mother's persuasion and take your advice about becoming an American citizen."

"Have you made application for naturalization?"

"Not yet, sir. Fact is, I was about to ask you to do it for me, ye know."

"Egad! it's well you didn't!" the senator exclaimed.

Mrs. Cragg gasped. "Senator, what do you mean? Quick!"

Again the senator glanced cautiously around. Then, softly: "I have come up from Washington to tell you—but in the strictest confidence—that the United States will declare war against Germany within ten days."

"Heavens! What does that mean for Alden?" cried the startled woman.

"Conscription by the British Government if he remains here. . ."

"He shall leave for Spain to-morrow! Oh, Senator, you kept telling me that America would not be drawn in!"

"I . . . I miscalculated . . . unfortunately. But I am sure we can get Alden out of the country. Of course we'll have

to hurry. The British Office knows we're going into the war, and they're starting to enforce their Conscription Bill. Egad! it will catch a lot of young Britishers who've come over here to avoid service."

"But . . . we will have Alden become an American citizen, as you advised!"

"Too late. The United States will send a million boys . . . two millions . . . Lord knows how many more! They'd nab Alden among the first, just because he . . . But Spain is still neutral. He should be safe there."

"*Should* be! Senator, you terrify me! Oh, why don't you men of influence *do* something? What have *I* done that I should suffer?"

"Nothing, surely, Madam! And you shall not!"

"You don't really think I am in danger, do you, Senator?" Alden gasped.

"Oh, no, hardly that," the senator assured him. "But it would be wise to keep away from your clubs and out of public view as much as possible until we can get you out of the country."

Alden removed his tall silk hat and wiped his forehead. Then, abruptly, he dodged back in the seat. A recruiting sergeant was standing on the corner around which the car whirled. Alden shuddered and drew his seal-lined coat closer.

"Oh," groaned Mrs. Cragg, "why can't they let us alone! Alden . . .!" She seized her son's arm in a paroxysm of fear. "Alden darling, they can't take you, they *can't!*"

"Don't worry, Madam," the senator strove to give comfort. "I will arrange an appointment for Alden in the British embassy in Madrid . . . something merely nominal, no real work . . . just to serve as an excuse for his going and to protect his name. Won't do, you know, to let our friends think he fled."

"I don't care what they think!" cried Mrs. Cragg sharply. "It is no disgrace for a man of Alden's character and family to avoid army service! There are plenty of common people to do the fighting! They needn't take *my* boy!"

"Certainly, Madam!" the senator hurried to agree. "And they shall not. Now, as I was saying, we will . . ."

"Listen, Senator, Alden is speaking," Mrs. Cragg interrupted, as the young man began an indistinct remark. "What is it, Alden dear?"

"I was about to say," Alden continued, "that if I should, say, enlist voluntarily . . ."

"*Alden!*" burst from his horrified mother.

". . . enlist voluntarily at, say, the British Recruiting

Office here, perhaps the senator's influence would be strong enough to keep me in this country . . . doing something light, ye know, at some bally camp or other."

"I advise against it, Alden," the senator counseled. "No, Spain is the place for you. And . . . er," his eyes twinkling, "I trust Miss Ethel will not permit you to go alone."

The young man drew himself up stiffly and turned a cold eye upon the senator. "Miss Whittier and I are not plighted, sir," he said with dignity.

"Surely! surely! And I beg to apologize for my levity," the senator hastened to make amends. "Dear, dear! what a pity Marian is not more like her charming sister. Strange girl! . . . But here is my hotel. Shall I see you this afternoon?"

"We are dining at the rectory to-day," Mrs. Cragg replied. "Could you call there and accompany us home?"

"With pleasure. 'Until then,' as the Spaniard says. You must begin to adopt Spanish mannerisms, Alden," nodding and smiling at the young man.

The senator alighted and the car started away, but Alden checked it. "I say, Senator," he said in a jerky undertone, "don't let anybody know I was planning to . . . well, to turn American citizen. I'm jolly well ashamed of it now, really I am!"

"You would be ashamed to become an American citizen?"

"Alden is an Englishman," his mother explained stiffly, "with all the traditions of Great Britain back of him. To become an American citizen, excepting as a measure of safety, would . . ."

"Would be a 'come-down,' as you fellows say, eh?" Alden finished.

"Quite right, quite right," the senator again quickly agreed. But there was an odd glint in his eyes as he said it. "Well, I must not keep you. Thank you so much for bringing me down."

As the car drew away from the curb Mrs. Cragg choked back a sob and clasped her son's hand. "Alden . . . they can't have you . . . they *can't!*"

"Don't worry, mother," he said, turning and slipping a comforting arm about her shoulders; "I really didn't mean all that bally rot about enlisting, ye know."

"I wouldn't worry, dear, only . . . things seem so different now! . . . The whole world has changed! . . . And everything was running so smoothly before! . . . Everybody happy and contented! . . . And now, *see!*" Her voice rose hysterically. "Oh, why doesn't somebody *do* something?"

"But, mother, nothing is going to happen to *us!*"

"No . . . I know . . . but . . . Oh, Alden, did you hear what Mrs. Tellus said to me in the vestryroom? The bell that you gave to the church . . ."

"W-well?" The boy's face was now ashen.

"It cracked . . . in the storm . . . last night!"

CHAPTER 3

AFTER Mrs. Whittier and Ethel had devoted an hour to discussion of the morning's events in the quiet of the library their perturbation in large measure subsided. It was not surprising, they comfortingly agreed, that, in the world's present disturbed state, sporadic outbursts from the lower classes should occur. They always did; these creatures invariably took advantage of great national crises to assert their own illegitimate presumptions. As for the rector's agitation and its unfortunate consequence in the dropping of the Host, that could well be attributed to strain from his multitudinous duties, social as well as ecclesiastical. The overworked man must have a rest—Mrs. Whittier was never so well nor Ethel so happy as when at Palm Beach, that was certain. And the Craggs—no need to worry but that *they* would know how to turn the brazen affront which that common Jew had publicly offered their rector and themselves! Yes, after all, things remained as they were; the Whittier world still spun in its limited orbit, with no diminution of speed—at least, none that was apparent to these two representatives of a people who had wilfully misread the portents blazoned in every event, great or small, from Serajevo down to that morning's ripple so disturbing to St. Jude's hitherto placid waters.

"I'm glad it happened—now," Ethel concluded, as she took up a novel from the littered table. "We'll get a trip out of it. And heaven knows we've been in a rut here in Crestelridge!"

Mrs. Whittier sighed. "We do need a change. And I'd begin to plan something definite, if only I knew what Alden Cragg intends to do. Oh, dear! why doesn't he come out and declare himself?"

"I've decided not to accept him if he does," Ethel answered curtly. "I . . . Where's that box of chocolates Harris Chaddock brought me? Mama, if you've eaten them . . .!"

Mrs. Whittier laughed a little shamefacedly. "I really

didn't mean to, dear," she apologized; "but I sat up last night with that book you're so wild about, that *Heroes of Filmdom*, and before I realized what I was doing . . ."

"You'd gobbled 'em all," Ethel finished. "Humph! If you'd been reading the *Missionary Review* I suppose you'd have drunk the communion wine to keep from drying up. Next box Harris brings me I'll know what to do with."

"Really, dear, Harris has no money to waste on chocolates," Mrs. Whittier gently chided. "He has just bought a car that must have cost a small fortune. If he had Alden Cragg's money . . ."

"Humph! Much good Alden's money does him," Ethel flung back. "He's as tight as the bark on a tree. Always dodging around corners for fear somebody will ask him a favor."

"He is only thrifty, my dear. The English all are."

"So are the Germans. I wouldn't care to marry either," Ethel retorted appositely.

"My dear! Are you really serious? You wouldn't refuse Alden Cragg for Harris Chaddock! Why, Harris has *nothing!*"

Ethel roused up and faced her mother defiantly. "But he has pep and get-up!" she contended. "And he knows life as Alden Cragg wouldn't know it in a million years!"

"But . . ."

"He isn't afraid to smoke a cigarette; and he isn't so pious that he offers sacrifice every time he hears a motorman swear! He swears himself . . . and I like it! He has backbone; Alden is a rag! Let Alden Cragg keep his millions and his piety and his tremendous British dignity; I prefer Harris Chaddock! Besides, when old Penberry shuffles off I'll have enough to take care of my husband; and then I'll want a live wire like Harris who can show me how to get the most for my money!"

"Ethel! You shock me!" The mother's tone was deeply anxious. "Oh, Ethel dear, don't do anything rash! Simeon Penberry is still alive. . ."

"For once you're right! He's too much alive! The idea, turning his London house over to the British army for a hospital—*my* house filled with a pack of hoodlums! He should have been under ground years ago! I wish I could put him there! . . . Why don't we do the way Marian does and just think the things we want till they come true? Why, she'd think old Penberry into committing suicide . . ."

"Ethel! My country! I hope you never say these things before others. The Penberry name . . ."

"Oh, yes, the Penberry name must be handled with gloves, so's not to endanger your getting into the 'Norman Dames'!

But let me tell you, if you are turned down by them it will be Marian's fault, not mine!"

There was a sound of swinging doors without, and the two rose, just as the rector entered the room. He came slowly forward, with head and shoulders bent as if with the burden of ages. He did not at once see his wife and daughter, and when at length he became aware of their presence it seemed to startle him.

"Why, Papa, what kept you so long?" Mrs. Whittier felt it her duty to ask.

"I . . . met with . . . the vestry for a few moments," he replied in a hollow voice. "Where is . . . Marian?"

"Why, we haven't seen her since church. I hadn't thought of her."

"That's just it!" his voice rose querulously; "we haven't thought of her enough!" He dropped heavily into a chair and leaned his head against his hand. But his driving thoughts seemed to prod him sharply, and he got to his feet again. "That Jew! Oh, I can still hear him . . .!"

"Why, Papa!" the two women exclaimed in unison.

"When I passed him, in the processional, he whispered . . . it was a hiss . . . *'Chaldean mesmerism!'* . . ."

Mother and daughter threw frightened glances at each other. The rector began to pace the room, nervously clasping and unclasping his hands behind his back. "I *have* been mesmerized!" he went on excitedly. "The vestry knew it. They knew that Marian was responsible for my unorthodox views. They told me plainly that I must shake off the deleterious influence . . . And whose influence is it, I ask, but that Galuth woman's who has cast her spell over the girl?" His voice became a shrill quaver. "It is occultism! The Jew was right, it *is* Chaldean mesmerism! And Marian must be kept away from her! Away from her, I say!"

"Oh!" Mrs. Whittier exclaimed again. Then, as she watched him striding back and forth, her ever practical mind turned to a more vital phase of the case. "Will this have any effect on your demand for an increase of salary, do you think?" she asked anxiously.

"Increase of salary!" he gave back bitterly. "I shall do well if I keep my church! What with the stirring anew of the old bickerings over our form of service, and the rivalries for place, and the petty jealousies, to have *this* occur! It is more than I can endure!"

Mrs. Whittier and Ethel again exchanged significant glances. Their bright vision of Palm Beach had flickered out in the black cloud of misfortune that had so suddenly enveloped them.

"Send Marian to me directly she comes," the rector concluded in a voice that still shook. Then he turned into his study and slammed the door.

Ethel wheeled sharply upon her mother. "Well," she demanded, "what do you think now?"

Mrs. Whittier sank into a chair. "I think it . . . very fortunate," she gasped, "that Alden Cragg . . . is coming . . . to dinner!"

"And that is a diplomatic hint to me to do my duty, I suppose! I am to be the lamb—or the goat—sacrificed for Marian's sins, and just because you and Papa haven't enough backbone to take a stand with her! I'm utterly disgusted with you both!"

"But she is our daughter . . ." Mrs. Whittier offered feebly.

"By adoption, yes. But that doesn't make her my sister."

"Ethel!" wailed the distraught woman.

"Don't 'Ethel' me!" cried the angry girl, stamping her foot. "I've tolerated her because you and Papa were scared stiff; but I've reached the limit now! Why, she's been home scarcely six months, and see what she's done! She's got the men—even Harris Chaddock—hypnotized by her fatal beauty and her glib tongue! She's put Papa in danger of losing his church! She's got the town talking about her crazy notions! She hobnobs with that notorious Galuth woman! She defends a Jew who publicly insults us! She's fighting Doctor Roake! And yet you cling to her like grim death!"

Mrs. Whittier began to whimper. "Oh, I must! I must! I can't . . . Oh, Ethel, don't refuse Alden . . . don't . . . *don't* . . . Oh, my country, my country!"

"For heaven's sake, Mama, don't blubber! You're having guests to dinner, and you look like a tomato! But let me tell you that you will simply *have* to get rid of Marian if you want peace in this family . . . Look," pointing toward the windows, "there's the Cragg car! . . . Well, of all things," she muttered through her set teeth, "if they aren't bringing Marian! . . . Alden, poor fool, simply can't let her alone!"

Mrs. Whittier sprang to her feet in panic and began to dab at her eyes and nose with a tiny lace handkerchief, while Ethel hastily arranged the hair over her own temples and smoothed out her dainty gown. Both struggled for a moment to assume expressions of calm, then hurried out into the hall to meet their guests, for Marian's glad laughter and lively chatter were already sounding in the vestibule.

"*So* glad you could come!" Mrs. Whittier gushed, extending a hand to each of the Craggs.

"They picked me up in the street," Marian announced as

she pushed forward, her eyes dancing and her face aglow. "Nearly ran over me. I was moping along with my thought a thousand miles away—no, more than that, for I was in France."

Mrs. Cragg's face went dark. A sneer curled Ethel's lips. Mrs. Whittier hastened to dispose of the girl. "Don't start talking about the war," she said coldly. "Papa has been asking for you. He is in his study. We will excuse you until dinner is served."

She turned to Mrs. Cragg and led her to a divan. "War and everything else that's disagreeable is strictly forbidden here," she continued in a badly controlled voice. "We've made a rule never to talk unhappiness of any kind, or permit any discordant influence to come into the house." As she spoke she gathered up the scattered parts of the Sunday newspaper and tossed them out of view.

Alden, who had tarried in the hall to survey his immaculate attire in a large pier glass, now lounged in, flicking an imaginary particle of dust from his sleeve. "A jolly good idea, Mrs. Whittier," he agreed nasally. "I too believe in avoiding everything disagreeable. If you're in a place where there's some bally thing you don't like, I say, get out."

"That's just what we are going to do, Alden," Mrs. Whittier returned, grateful to the fellow for affording the opening. "We are going to Palm Beach right after Easter. Don't you think you and your mother could join us?"

"Thank you," Mrs. Cragg replied coolly, "but Alden's patriotism will not permit him to play any longer. He is giving himself to the service."

"What?" cried Ethel. "Enlisting? Oh, Alden, you'll look swell in khaki!"

"Certainly not!" Mrs. Cragg vehemently corrected. "He is to take a portfolio in the British embassy in Madrid. Senator Chaddock informed us this morning of his appointment. We shall leave this week."

Marian, who had paused at the study door, wheeled about at these words. Her eyes met Alden's, and for a moment the two stood looking at each other. Then his face flushed, and he turned in embarrassment to Ethel. At that moment the rector emerged from his study and hurried past Marian to greet the guests.

The Reverend Wilson Whittier seldom dined alone on Sunday, albeit his guests were usually those of his wife's choosing. However, he had acquiesced heartily in her selection for this particular day, for he had ever set great store by the Craggs. Between them and himself existed a bond that stretched

back over many years and found anchorage in a common ancestry in Old England. True, the kinship was distant—he and the father of Alden Cragg had been cousins far removed —but it sufficed, together with their common traditions, to cement the families as closely as a nature so coldly imperious as that of Mrs. Cragg would permit.

This day, because of their common share in the distressing events of the morning, the rector felt himself more strongly drawn to the Craggs than ever. The clattering of the skeleton still echoed faintly within; the faces about his board momentarily dissolved into leering Memphian skulls as he took his seat at dinner, and his eyes, despite him, persisted in straying upward to the opposite wall, as if anticipant of a flaming judgment. His blood chilled under the thought of the possible consequences of his muddled sermon: loss of his church, of his prestige . . . "It is indeed a fateful Sunday!" he mentally reflected, as he sank into his chair with a tremulous sigh. And then, closing his eyes for the perfunctory blessing, he mused that, regarding his interview with the vestry in the very worst light possible, the long foreshadowed union between his daughter Ethel and the very rich and aristocratic scion of this proud British family must prove his temporal salvation. . .

"Papa is expecting to attend theTriennial General Convention of the church next month," Mrs. Whittier began nervously, yet knowing that she was launching the conversation in a safe channel. "He must get away for a while. He hasn't been a bit well lately. Overwork and anxiety. Your cold seems worse this morning, dear," she concluded, regarding the rector with feigned solicitude.

He threw her a grateful look. "I feel as if I had caught miasma from that dreadful fog last night," he replied, and coughing slightly in corroboration. "I shall be glad to get away. I meant to have announced the convention from my . . . the pulpit this morning," he amplified, laboring visibly to appear at ease. "Some vitally important topics are scheduled for discussion."

"Dancing and 'movies'?" suggested Ethel, laughing up at Alden. "I'm awfully interested, for I'm going into the 'movies' some day. Harris Chaddock has a 'movie' friend, Fay Meuse. . ."

"Ethel!" cried Mrs. Whittier aghast. Then, turning to Mrs. Cragg and forcing a smile: "The child is *so* temperamental, and she feels the limitations of Crestelridge . . ."

"Er . . . such matters as the revision of the *Book of Common Prayer,*" the rector continued, trying to appear unconcerned, "and the . . ."

"Are you going to have 'em cut out Lent?" asked the irrepressible Ethel, cocking her head saucily at her father. "It's all out of fashion now, and Otto Hoeffel says we're at least a thousand years behind the times. . ."

"Ethel!" The embarrassed rector frowned at her. "Lent is . . ."

"Is a kill-joy!" the girl laughed. "It causes dyspepsia and melancholia. It must have been after Lent that that part of the Prayer Book was written that says: 'O Lord, there is no health in us'."

"Daughter!"

"The true meaning of Lent," Marian observed gravely, "is a fast from material thinking. It is the acting of the knowledge that matter is unreal."

"Matter unreal!" cried Ethel in derision. She broke into a laugh and began to pound vigorously upon the table with her fists. "Is matter unreal? Listen! Is it? And I'll bet it's real enough to you when you've got a pain!"

Even Alden smiled at this sally. And the rector felt his embarrassment decrease. "The convention," the latter continued, more at ease, "will be conducted in accord with a broad program. I think it will manifest an enlarged vision. . ."

"I hope it will have sufficient vision to strike from the Prayer Book that clause which classifies the Jews with infidels and heretics," said Marian.

Alden Cragg turned sharply upon her. "Is there any difference?" he demanded coldly.

"The Jew is now seeking the Christ," she gently answered.

"Marian!" Mrs. Whittier was beginning to tremble. The conversation was headed toward breakers.

"I was about to ask," the rector hurried bravely on, after a frightened glance at Marian, "if you would attend the convention with me, Alden?"

The young man looked at his mother for reply. "Alden expects to leave for Spain this week," Mrs. Cragg said, very concisely. "He has an appointment in the British embassy in Madrid."

"Indeed!" exclaimed the rector, dropping his fork upon his plate with a loud clatter. Then he shot a deeply questioning glance at Ethel. "Why . . . we can't spare Alden! Er . . . Madrid, you say? Abominable climate—in fact, highly dangerous. . ."

"I am a bit worried over that myself," Mrs. Cragg returned, looking anxiously at Alden. "I shall consult Doctor Roake in regard to it to-morrow. Alden is not strong, you know."

"But of course he will not remain there long," the rector offered hopefully. "The war must soon end. . ."

"England has her back up now, Harris says," Ethel pertly observed.

"Her back is against the wall," said Marian quickly. "She is bleeding from every pore."

"Well, let her bleed," Ethel replied brazenly, and with a sly look at Mrs. Cragg.

"She is calling to us," Marian continued earnestly. "America's hour has struck. It is the year nineteen-seventeen."

"What's that got to do with it?" Ethel demanded.

"Manasseh will now go to the aid of Ephraim. The 'times of the Gentiles' have closed. . ."

"Manasseh? Ephraim?" echoed Ethel blankly. "Who are they? You're wandering!"

"America can best serve the world by remaining neutral," the rector interrupted in a voice pitched higher than was his wont, "and continuing to supply the allied armies with food and munitions."

"Manasseh and Ephraim!" Ethel repeated scornfully. "More of Marian's Jew friends." And she looked up at Alden and giggled.

Mrs. Cragg hastened to add her confirmation of the rector's pacific sentiment. "You are quite correct, Wilson," she agreed. "America has no right to break her established precedent and mix into foreign quarrels."

"Let us not talk about the war," Mrs. Whittier pleaded. "Such an utterly stupid thing! It's got everything upset—and what for? We will only have to settle back again as we were . . . But, as I said, we don't discuss unpleasant things here."

"Humph! The war hasn't upset me much," Ethel averred. "Except that I can't get dress materials and such, I've quite enjoyed it. It's like watching a polo match and guessing which side will win. Makes a dandy lot of excitement!"

"It makes a lot of taxes," said Mrs. Cragg grimly, "and my barristers have been hard put to avoid them. Why, Wilson, I've divided my property under a dozen different names, but still half my income goes to the British Government!"

"But aren't you glad to pay for your freedom?" cried Marian, utterly unable to repress her feelings.

"Pay!" Alden echoed, and raising his monocle. "I say, let those who caused the bally war pay for it!"

"But we *all* caused it!" the girl declared. "We are *all* to blame! Oh, if people would only see!"

Mrs. Cragg and her son stared at the girl uncomprehendingly. Mrs. Whittier tapped on the table with her fingers and bit her lips. Ethel looked over at her mother and snickered. Then Mrs. Cragg, ignoring Marian, turned to the rector.

"You were speaking about the convention . . ." she began coldly.

"Oh, yes, I . . . I was about to say," he replied, and so hurriedly that his words telescoped, "that the convention will probably advise several vital changes—for example, permitting the dipping of the bread in the wine when the sacrament is administered to the dying. Then there is the suggestion to revive the ancient custom of anointing the sick with oil, and the laying on of hands. . . Very important, *very* important!"

"Very," Alden agreed with unfeigned sincerity. "But, I say, all this bally agitation about healing. . . You are going to offend Doctor Roake if you support that 'Union for Christian Healing,' ye know."

Marian's eyes glowed fiercely, and she turned quickly upon Alden. "You believe, then, that the man who is sorry for his *sins* can be forgiven, but the one who is sorry for his *sickness* is beyond the pale of the Church?"

Alden's monocle dropped from his eye and he sat back and stared hard at her. "I say!" he presently began.

Marian did not permit him to finish. "Health is no longer 'wholeness'," she contended, "and it no longer rests with God, but with legislatures. When Doctor Roake's bill passes, giving him legal authority to control human bodies, do you think mankind will be healthier?"

"The Wess bill? . . . But, I say," Alden blurted, "it will pass in spite of you! Senator Chaddock said so! And we support it because it is a sane . . ."

"Alden is quite right," Mrs. Cragg put in, addressing the rector and again ignoring Marian. "These mental healing schemes are only heathen philosophy, and have nothing to do with the Christian religion. You are with us there, Wilson?"

"Er . . . yes . . . yes," the confused rector stammered. "I fear I did not make myself understood from the pulpit this morning. I feel that I should make a correction next Sunday. It is a matter . . . er . . . a matter that must be handled judiciously, else discord may be engendered. You recall, Alden, what hard feeling was aroused by the thoughtless action of one of our western clergymen recently, who permitted a nonconformist minister to take part in a service of commemoration in the cathedral? I wrote a note of protest to the bishop of that diocese myself. H'm! I do hope the convention will seriously consider the matter of making theology safe. But, as I was saying, there are other vital matters to come up for consideration, such as the suggestion of a prayer for blessing a grave. . .'

Mrs. Cragg shuddered and glanced quickly at her son.

". . . and prayers for the dead. You see, Alden, they are approximating ever more closely our own conception of the Church. H'm! Then there will also be a discussion as to the advisability of dropping the Old Testament readings from the regular church service and the Sunday schools. The question has quite naturally arisen as to whether the Old Testament is to be taken seriously or not, inasmuch as . . . er . . . the chief function of the Church is to teach the gospel of the incarnation, and we are limited to trying to impart this in an hour or less each week. If . . ."

"The Old Testament," Marian put in pointedly, "shows that men once possessed powers that they do *not* possess now. No wonder it is being rejected in these days of nothing but *matter,* for those now lost powers were spiritual. Why don't you seek to recover them?"

The rector turned in exasperation upon her. "Because," he answered her severely, "we are opposed to experimenting with the laws of life." Then he shifted again toward Mrs. Cragg and resumed: "There will also be, I think, a proposal to shorten the Ten Commandments. . ."

"No need of that," Ethel interjected with a laugh. "They're too short now to be seen."

"Don't be facetious over sacred matters, daughter!" her mother admonished. "The Commandments are . . ."

"Humph! the 'Thou-shalt-nots' of a lot of Hebrew bandits!" the girl finished.

"Daughter!" the rector expostulated. "Do not speak lightly of the ancient Hebrews! There were many wonderful characters among them. Abraham's firm faith will ever be an ensample to us."

"Then their modern descendants can't resemble them much," Ethel persisted. "The Jews are a hateful, piggish lot, and I'm for packing them all off to Palestine and then flooding the country!"

"The Jews may go back to Palestine," Marian contended, "but hatred will not send them there. 'Judah shall walk to Israel'; but only when called in love."

"Love!" Ethel snickered again and threw a covert glance at Alden. "Marian certainly does seem to love the Jews, doesn't she?"

"Probably she thinks we Christians are required to love those who would destroy our religion," Alden observed cynically. "That fellow who sneaked into church this morning . . ."

"He should have been whipped out!" declared Ethel.

"Oh, the Jews have been well whipped out for not embrac-

ing Christianity," said Marian quickly; "but if what David Barach saw in church this morning was Christianity . . ."

The rector choked and coughed loudly into his napkin. Mrs. Whittier turned her flaming face upon the girl. "Marian! We don't care for your radical views now!" What possessed that girl?

"Er . . . our institutional activities, Alden," the rector resumed feverishly, "are beginning to crowd our church structure. I have already mentioned the matter to some of our wealthiest communicants, and they have assured me of abundant funds to meet our requirements. It is a great satisfaction to me at this time of world-disturbance to realize how securely entrenched St. Jude's is financially. No longer must we say: 'Silver and gold have I none' . . ."

"But neither can you say: 'Rise up and walk'," added Marian in a low tone.

"I . . . er . . .!" The rector gripped the arms of his chair. Mrs. Whittier straightened up and glowered at Marian. Was the girl taking advantage of her position to embarrass them further? What in heaven's name had happened—over night, Mrs. Whittier might say—that moved her thus openly to defy them and threaten a scandal that must shatter their domestic and social life and drive the rector from his church?

"How differently American young people develop from the way our English children do," remarked Mrs. Cragg icily, breaking the embarrassing silence. "With such extreme views, and so aggressive in voicing them."

Mrs. Whittier wilted into her chair, consuming with shame. Yet she must admit that Mrs. Cragg was right and the rebuke just.

Marian turned and studied Mrs. Cragg deliberately for a moment. Then, slowly: "We *do* have radical views, and we *are* aggressive in voicing them. If we were not, the world would perish." She turned and looked at Alden. "Alden is answering his country's call . . ."

Mrs. Cragg gasped and raised her lorgnette upon the girl. Alden paled.

". . . I think it time he knew what really caused the war. I think you all should know, for apparently you haven't the slightest conception of it. It is the same thing that has caused my radical views; it is the thing that drove David Barach into church this morning; it is *spiritual starvation!*"

The seemingly interminable dinner, although consisting of but five courses, came to an outwardly decorous end; and Mrs. Whittier, sighing audibly, led her guests into the drawing-room. She came away from the table with but a hazy recollection of

what was said after Marian's tilt with Mrs. Cragg; but she knew there had followed long intervals of embarrassing quiet, broken occasionally by Ethel's vapid chatter and brief exchanges of harmless comment between Mrs. Cragg and herself on weather and dress. The rector had maintained a severe silence; and Alden had spoken only when Ethel's inconsequential remarks to him required reply.

And yet, despite Mrs. Whittier's harassed feelings, the dinner had been a pronounced success, in that, while closet doors had frequently swung open and sundry skeletons had been disclosed, yet the doors had been slammed quickly shut again before their dangling, grinning occupants could clatter out. No mention had been made of the vestry meeting, of the senator's startling announcement, of the cracked bell, or of various other items that combined to form problems the like of which these favored ones had never struggled with before, problems that had suddenly risen out of the chaotic thought of a world now dourly punished for the worship of its own false gods.

As the harmony of her dinner had been so unexpectedly, so rudely disturbed, so was Mrs. Whittier's carefully planned disposition of her guests afterward quite upset. For they had scarcely risen from table when Senator Chaddock and his son were announced.

Ethel, with a glad cry, immediately appropriated Harris and dragged him away to a secluded corner. Mrs. Whittier followed her with a despairing look, then turned to the senator. "Such bad form," the latter apologized, his eyes still on Mrs. Cragg; "but I have decided to return to Washington to-night, and then go up to Albany. The Wess bill, in which we are all so deeply interested, demands my attention. Doctor Roake and I have just been in consultation over it. The doctor intends to drop in here shortly, on his return from the hospital." He turned and threw a significant glance at Alden. "By the way, I will take Alden down to Washington with me to-night, if agreeable to you. That appointment, you know. . . Of course our dear Whittiers have been informed?"

Marian had been standing apart from the others, now looking at Alden, now at the rector, or Senator Chaddock. Once, twice, she turned to leave the room, then came back and stood hesitant. At length her lips set and she started in Alden's direction, just as the rector left his chair at Alden's side and came toward her.

"I . . . er . . . come into the study with me for a few moments, Marian," he bade her in a hesitant voice.

The girl looked steadily into his eyes. "Not now," she objected. "I have an errand in the city. When I return I will come to you. Please ask Alden to go with me."

The rector fell back, his face a blank. The girl smiled, but there was a glow in her big eyes. "I will not be gone long," she assured him; "and I promise to come to you as soon as I return."

"I shall leave Alden in Madrid and go up to London," Mrs. Cragg's voice was heard rising like a chill wind. "Our miserable Irish tenantry are giving us trouble. He will be safe, don't you think?"

"Ah, my dear Madam, don't worry." The urbane senator was the embodiment of comfort.

Marian laid a hand upon the rector's arm. He looked up into the face of the resolute girl before him; then reluctantly he left her and went to Alden with her request.

"Why, I say," that young man protested, as he rose to his feet, "my car isn't working well, ye know."

"We will take father's," said Marian, coming to him; "and I will drive."

Alden looked quizzically at the rector. The latter slowly nodded. "Go with her," he bade the youth. But he did so against his judgment, for a great apprehension sat upon his soul. Yet he turned away and joined the others.

CHAPTER 4

WHY Marian Whittier should still seek occasion to be thrown with him was to Alden Cragg an enigma; he had shown her so unmistakably that she was tolerated only for her father's sake. Yet why he continued to be attracted to her was just as inexplicable. True, she possessed in superabundant measure beauty, wit, vivacity; but she was an iconoclast—and dependent.

"I say," he demanded petulantly, sitting beside her and watching, with reluctant admiration, her deft handling of the car, "I say, why did you say that at dinner about answering my country's call?"

She did not reply, but held her eyes to the road, for the car was now pacing the wind. Minutes passed. He forgot his unanswered question as he watched her manage the wheel. "My word!" he at length exclaimed; "you are an expert driver!"

She smiled. "I am glad of that, Alden. Perhaps I could drive a car in France."

His face clouded. "I say, has *that* silly notion got hold of you?"

"Yes," she answered. "I may go over with you."

"Eh? . . . When I go to Spain?"

She did not reply; nor did he venture to speak again, but turned and sat staring out through the window. A cemetery went flying by; and the spectral vaults and shafts seemed suddenly to rise and leer at him with hideous, mocking grimaces. A suggestion of rottenness and foul odors came over him. He shuddered and sank back in the seat, where he sat regarding the girl, wonderingly, as at first, then with a growing sense of uneasiness. A full half hour passed thus. Then the fleeting car shot across the boundary of Greater New York and drew up to the curb in front of a vacant building.

"Well!" she exclaimed, sitting back, "that was going some, wasn't it?"

"I'll say so!" he heartily agreed, his spirits now reviving. "But what's your errand here?" glancing out at the dingy structure.

She turned and looked steadily into his eyes. "Alden," she said, "there is a British recruiting office just around the corner. My errand is there."

He shot bolt upright and laid a hand on the door of the car.

"It is in charge of Lieutenant Derby," she continued, unmindful of his action. "I telephoned him after church this morning . . . to learn if he would be here now. I had just talked with him when you picked me up."

He drew a long, quivering breath and turned to her again. "Eh? . . . You're going into the ambulance service . . . after all?"

"I may . . . I don't know. . . But, first, I want to talk with you."

"I say, it's bally rot, if you want *my* opinion. But you American girls don't take advice."

"Alden," she went on, ignoring the innuendo, "in a very short time America will declare war against the Central Powers. . ."

"How do you know?" he demanded, his brows lifting in surprise. "Did Senator Chaddock tell you?"

"No. . . But I see now that he has told you. And because of it, you expect to flee with him to-night."

"See here," he blustered, "you can't talk that way to me! My affairs are not yours. . ."

"No, your problems are *not* mine. But . . . Alden, a child fell into the river at Burnham last summer. It was drowning. The child's salvation was its own problem . . . but it could not swim. It was going down. I plunged into the water and saved it. Did I do wrong?"

"Eh? Why . . . no."

"And should I do nothing now to save you?"

"Save me?" he echoed blankly. "Now, I say, but you are deucedly interested in me . . . what?"

"Alden, I knew, long ago, that this war would burst upon the world, and I knew when it would come. I knew, long ago, that America would enter it, and this year. I knew that the overthrow of Prussian autocracy must shortly occur; that Jerusalem must soon be liberated; that . . ."

"My word!" he exclaimed breathlessly, "how did you guess all that?"

"And I have known what was coming upon you. I have seen the subtle manipulation of your mentality, your blinding mesmerism; and now I see your awful danger!"

"Now, I say . . ."

"I know that when this war broke out you fled from England to the United States; but you came at another's suggestion. And you knew not really why. I know that here you have been protected, seemingly, though it has been the protection of the hunter's trap. I have long seen the deadly thing that is striking at you. Oh, I know, it is striking at Great Britain through you —but it will destroy you in the process! . . ."

"Marian!" The youth's face was ashen. "You can't talk to me like this!"

"I know," she went on, unmindful of his agitation, "what unseen influence is making you run from your problems under the mesmeric belief that you are in that way solving them. I know what is making you disloyal, cowardly. . ."

"Look here!" he burst out; "you're blaming me for not enlisting! I know. But let me tell you, I'm not a bally slacker! I have my principles. . ."

"And Doctor Roake upholds you in them?"

"Yes, he does, if you want to know! And, anyway, I don't believe in war. But, as it is, I am helping . . ."

"Yet *you* are the one in need."

"I? What . . . I say, *I* don't need anything but to be let alone!"

"Oh, Alden, your need is so great that you are a beggar!"

"A beg . . . I say, a *Cragg* a beggar?"

"A beggar and a slave, Alden, a *slave!* Your mentality is bound! You are absolutely dominated by . . ."

An exclamation burst from him. She paused, while he stared at her with open mouth. Then a sickly smile spread over his pallid face. "I say, Marian . . . you're joking, eh?"

"Joking? About what, Alden? About the things society will say when it learns of your flight to Spain? About what the British Office will do to you and yours when America enters the war? About the sneers of your clubmates? About the slurs of the gossipers, the gibes of the newspapers? About your ruined future; about the shame, the disgrace, the . . . oh, *worse* . . .?"

He gaped at her in dull amaze.

"Alden, there is only *one* way left now out of it all: you can be saved only by giving yourself to your country!"

He found his voice again. "But I *am!*" he blurted. "I am going to Spain! Can't you see that I'm helping?"

"Helping the enemy, yes, Alden, by giving him comfort and support. True, you have large possessions in Germany, as well as here, which you are trying to save; but you will lose them all . . . all, Alden, unless you turn. Oh, Alden, I see your awful danger! I will turn with you! I will stand at your side and help you face the forces that are driving against you! Alden, hear me, heed me, and *turn!*"

"Eh? Now, I say, you mean . . . *enlist?* Why, you know I'd be rejected! I'm anemic. . . Doctor Roake said I was . . . said they wouldn't take me. I'd be risking my life!"

"Your life! Alden, you don't know what real life is. It isn't what you have always thought. Oh, Alden, you cannot be so weak as to refuse to venture your human sense of life for Principle in this hour of world-struggle—a struggle for which you are partly responsible!"

"But, I say, how can *I* be responsible? I'm opposed to war. My religion . . ."

"Your religion, Alden, is a stoning of the Christ!"

"Marian! Look here, I'll not listen to any more! Turn around; we're going back!"

She shook her head. "There is no going back for you, Alden," she said in a low, determined tone. "I have brought you here to enlist."

"Eh?"

"That is my errand."

She bent toward the wheel, but his hand crashed heavily down upon her arm. She looked around at him. His eyes were bulging, his face purple, his mouth quivering. "Turn around!" he commanded in a shaking voice. "We're going back!"

"Back to what?" she asked again. "To the liberty that you are accepting from the dead hands of your fallen countrymen? To the loss of your mentality, your manhood, all, at the hands of those who pretend to be your friends? No, there is no going back for you, Alden."

"You're mad!" he muttered through his chattering teeth. His shaking hand went out to the door.

"It is locked," she said, watching his futile attempt to open it.

"Then open it!" he demanded, his face white and his brow wet.

"Alden," she pleaded, "listen to me; it is your only way . . ."

"Open it! . . . or I'll smash the glass!"

Her lips set. "If you do, I will call that policeman yonder and have you arrested," she said firmly.

"Arrested!" he gasped.

"And further, Alden," and her voice sounded to him like the doom of judgment, "if you will not turn with me and save yourself, if you will not go now to that recruiting station and give yourself to your country, then I will forestall what I know others are intending to do to you and will go at once and denounce you!"

He turned slowly and stared at her with open mouth. "De . . . *nounce!*" he echoed in a hoarse whisper.

"Yes. I shall report what I know to Lieutenant Derby. Your arrest will follow to-day. The British Government will be informed immediately. The newspapers will blazon it forth in 'extras' to-night! . . ."

"You would be driven from town!" he cried.

"Yes, I know it. I am sacrificing myself. . . Oh, Alden, you little know! . . ." There was a yearning note in her voice, a tenderness, a pathos that spoke volumes.

Silence fell upon them both. The girl sat waiting, hoping; the stunned youth stared blankly at her. Then at length she looked up at him. "It is the only way, Alden," she repeated gently. "I do this because . . ."

"You are doing it because you hate me!" he gulped out. "You think I've treated you rotten! . . ."

She laid a hand on his arm. "I am doing it, Alden, because I *love* you," she said in a choking voice. "I am giving you my life, for it means ruin to me, either way. But for you it is salvation. Will you go?"

"No!"

She moved her foot quickly and started the motor. Alden rose from the seat and thrust his elbow through the glass of the door. The car shot forward, and he fell heavily back. The policeman on the opposite corner heard the crash and started after them. While the confused Alden was collecting himself the car had rounded the corner and pulled up to the curb again. He turned to the broken window. His eyes blurred. His thought was a riot. Then his mother's words flashed through his mind: "The bell that you gave to the church . . . it cracked in the storm last night!" He started up, a gurgling cry in his throat. . .

The door opened and the panting policeman thrust his head in. Marian faced him. "The door was locked," she offered in explanation. "This is Alden Cragg, a British subject. He is going to enlist."

An officer in the British uniform came hurrying out of a

doorway. Alden's knees shook when he saw him. "Lieutenant Derby?" he heard the girl's voice at his side. Alden tried vainly to thrust out an arm to stop her. Fear had frozen him.

"Ah, so this is Alden Cragg!" the officer exclaimed. "We had about given you up, Mr. Cragg. Lucky you came voluntarily to-day!"

CHAPTER 5

IT was a smug world that in 1914 stood before the universities of the higher criticism and impatiently demanded entrance. It was a shocked and utterly uncomprehending world that the shots at Serajevo drove into the Antechamber of Mizraim's great "altar," there to be laid to the plummet. It was a gasping, blood-spitting world that, after two reeling years of slaughter, lifted its battered head from the smoking ruins of civilization—a civilization that had demonstrated to the full the logic of worldly wisdom—and cried out in the agony of a vast disillusionment for the foolishness of God to save it from the hellish educational systems of the Pharaohs.

It was only the penetrating mind of the metaphysician that saw in those early days the tremendous significance of the cataclysm—saw that the jumbled content of human consciousness was being forced up to Truth for readjustment. The close neighborhood of the Craggs and Whittiers, the Telluses, Blacks and Kerls saw it not at all. How could they, these silly birds, with their heads buried in the sand? Of the gale sweeping Europe, only its fringe reached sheltered Crestelridge. Death blew in withering blasts from the land of Franz Mesmer; yet these felt only the equinoctial that rocked the tower of St. Jude's and cracked the Cragg Memorial. Nothing less than a shock violent enough to crack the adamant of their souls would make them lift their heads. Yet the premonitory tremors of that shock had now come, in the enlistment of Alden Cragg.

Marian Whittier entered the drawing-room and went at once to the rector. The latter was absorbed in conversation with Mrs. Cragg. "We must inject money and vigor into Christianity," he was saying eagerly, "just as the capitalist injects them into industry. I have worked out some interesting innovations which I hope to inaugurate at once. We have the plant—the most complete in New England—we have the cash, the energy, and the ideas. St. Jude's is now a factor to be reckoned with, a great socializing industry, throbbing with activity. We are not Episcopal merely, we have progressed: we are English

Catholic. Some day we shall become a cathedral—the Cathedral of St. Jude's. . . Ah!"

"I am ready now, father."

The rector turned and looked up. His face fell as he saw Marian standing beside him. "We . . . we will wait, daughter," he said, a bit querulously.

"Alden is more vitally interested in St. Jude's than ever," Mrs. Cragg observed, ignoring the girl's presence. "When he returns from Spain . . . But . . . *Where is he?*"

The question was shot directly at Marian, for Mrs. Cragg had glanced up and read something in the girl's face that damped the pulsing of her heart.

"I left him at the recruiting office," Marian answered quietly. "He has enlisted."

Mrs. Cragg solidified under the shock of the announcement. The rector dropped back in his chair, mouth open and speechless. The conversation of the others fell; and silence descended like a blanket upon the room.

Then a cry burst from the rector, and he sprang to his feet. The others rose hurriedly and came crowding about. Senator Chaddock took charge of the situation at once. . .

Facing them, alone, Marian did not seek to shift the burden of responsibility from her own shoulders. If it was moral cowardice, with fear and shame commingled, that had bolstered the self-ensnared Alden before the lieutenant and forced from his trembling lips a vow of fealty to Britain in this, her hour of sore need, the girl gave no hint of it. It was because of her persuasion that he had acted, she frankly admitted. It was her words that had opened his mind to the performance of a duty long deferred. Beyond this, nothing.

The Whittiers and Harris Chaddock, wide-eyed and gasping, turned to the stricken mother. The senator rushed to the telephone and called the recruiting office. He returned with slow step and bent head. Under his reluctant corroboration Mrs. Cragg's dulled ears burst open, and the awful truth pierced her resisting mentality. A frenzy of terror seized upon her that rendered her pitiable. She rose and threw herself into the arms of Mrs. Whittier in a paroxysm of woe. She declared wildly that she would go to the barracks, to the camp, that night; that she would spend the last penny of the Cragg fortune, would exert the last ounce of Cragg prestige, to effect Alden's freedom. The proud, formal woman might have withstood any blast of Fate but this; but Alden, her beloved, her idol, the soul and center of her being . . .

Her mounting emotion turned to exacerbation. She flew at Marian with the fury of a tigress; and only the strong arms of

Harris Chaddock saved the girl from bodily injury. They could not save her from an excoriation that embodied Crestelridge's excommunication and placed the Whittiers in the awful position of harboring a social pariah.

"But, my dear Madam," the senator offered excitedly, "the lieutenant informs me that Alden has not been examined . . . the physician was absent! Let us call Doctor Roake and have him employ his great influence at once!"

The unhappy woman wheeled upon him and snatched wildly at the slender hope. "You can save him, Senator? You can save him?" she cried.

"No doubt of it, Madam," said the senator, himself now measurably recovered from the shock. "I am certain the physician will reject him anyway. Alden is not rugged, as you know. . ."

The rector hastened now to offer his propitiatory crumb. "He is anemic!" he quavered.

"Besides," the senator went on, "assume that he is accepted: why, America is going in soon, and she will send so many boys that Alden will not be needed. The British will slow up, you know, when our boys get to going over."

"But . . . he might be sent . . . *before!*" wailed Mrs. Cragg.

"Doctor Roake and I will see that he is kept in this country, Madam," the senator assured her.

"Perhaps so! . . . Perhaps . . . But . . . Oh, what can he do without me? Take me to him! Call my car! Take me home! Take me home!"

"At once, Madam!" the senator acquiesced, beginning to bustle about. "Here, Harris, you take her in our car! I will call Doctor Roake at the hospital and have him at 'Craggmont' when we arrive! Come! The boy is not lost! There, Madam," laying a comforting hand upon the sufferer's shoulder, "we'll get him out yet!"

Mrs. Whittier, consuming with fear of the consequences of Marian's inexplicable conduct, yet always mindful of personal interests, however desperate the situation, checked her sympathetic tears long enough to offer a practical suggestion. "I shall let you have Ethel; you need her! Ethel dear," turning to the girl, who was deriving an immense enjoyment from the distressful situation, "get ready to go with Mrs. Cragg. There, dear, don't worry," taking Mrs. Cragg tenderly by the arm and supporting her on one side, while Harris Chaddock lent his aid on the other, as the moaning woman began to grope her way to the exit. "It was a shameful thing for Marian to do—but, dear, remember, she's not our child. Think what we have suffered

at her hands! And now this additional trial! But don't worry. Alden has powerful friends. . . Just think what Doctor Roake means at a time like this! Now wouldn't you like a little wine?" She turned to her husband. "Bring her some sherry, Papa. Hurry!"

Mrs. Cragg wrenched herself from her supporters and rushed to Marian. "Why . . . why did you do it . . . why . . . why . . . *why?*" she almost shrieked.

The girl stood her ground. "I did it because I love him," she answered firmly.

Mrs. Cragg recoiled as if struck another blow. Gasps of astonishment burst from the others. Ethel laughed aloud. Then Mrs. Cragg, crushed, humiliated, turned, with bowed head, and permitted herself to be led from the room.

When the confusion incident upon the hurried departure of the guests had subsided, Mrs. Whittier fell into a chair and groaned loudly. "My head! Oh, I am going to faint! My salts . . . in that drawer, Papa! Quick! Oh, my country, my country, what a day!"

The harassed rector feverishly procured the salts; and Mrs. Whittier lay back and closed her eyes against her troubled world while he held the vial to her quivering nostrils. For a few moments he watched her anxiously; then, assured that she would not seek consolation in hysteria, he turned to Marian, who had stood apart during the harrowing scene. "Help me take her to her room," he commanded sternly.

At this Mrs. Whittier started up violently. "Don't touch me!" she screamed, glaring at Marian. "Oh!" She struggled to her feet. The rector put his arms about her and led her away. "I must get to my room and lie down!" she moaned. "Oh, my country, what a day! what a day!"

"Go to my study," the rector turned and bade Marian when he reached the door. "Wait there till I return."

Though the Reverend Wilson Whittier tarried in his wife's chamber until that tormented soul querulously bade him cease his pottering and be gone, it was not because of solicitude for the complaining woman, but, rather, for lack of moral courage to confront the girl who awaited him in his study below. And as he slowly, and with many pauses, descended the stairs, he realized more clearly than ever before how extraordinary and complex was his task. For it had at last been driven home to him that Marian Whittier was now a law unto herself.

Ah, how mistaken had been his policy toward her! He could see it now, as he glanced back over the years—could see that, had he kept her at his side, he might have uprooted in their incipience those modes of thought which now, alas! he

knew were ineradicable. More, he might have forestalled the inevitable. . .

But how that bony thing did rattle! Heavens! it was clattering out to grip him again!

"You believe in God?"

"I . . . don't . . . know!"

"But that which is hid shall be revealed?"

"Yes . . . perhaps . . . God forbid!"

Whir-r-r! Rat-tle-e-e! And it shook him till he fell against the banisters and gasped for breath!

He pulled himself up. He would go to her and tell her the whole miserable story! He would tell her that he loved her, that he admired her above all mankind for her stand, that in his heart of hearts he *did* yearn toward her, that he knew her outlook upon life to be far better grounded than his. . .

He had turned to her often during those brief home visits which Mrs. Whittier had grudgingly permitted the girl—turned to her because her incisive penetration into that which lies behind the material veil, because her deep scholarship, her unfailing optimism, and her unfeigned love for him, as for all mankind, had afforded him a measure of compensation for lack of these qualities in his wife and Ethel, whose crass materialism had defeated his every effort to break the chains which they had forged upon him. . .

Needless to point out that he felt that his matrimonial venture—now of five and twenty years duration—with the daughter of Simeon Penberry had not conduced to his spiritual growth. True, he still loved her . . . but the sentiment had altered greatly since that day when, a promising, ambitious young Yorkshire clergyman, he had so proudly made her his life companion. . .

It had all been different, no doubt, had he not immediately accepted that alluring call to the United States. For, though his first child still might have died in infancy, and though he and his wife might have adopted a babe, as they did, yet had they remained in England, the adopted child would *not* have been Marian. And the hideous skeleton would not have taken up its long abode in his gloomy soul. For scarce had the adopted babe been installed in their home when Mrs. Whittier made the alarming discovery that she would again become a mother. And in due season thereafter a daughter was born, whom they christened Ethel.

Under the distressful circumstances Mrs. Whittier turned her face to the wall and wept aloud. Then she summoned her worried husband to her bedside and, feigning a weakness that presaged death, swore him to complicity in the plan which she

had evolved. Her love for the adopted babe was dead; but they were saddled with the child, and must meet the situation with an eye single to their own daughter's future. While it would be impolitic to rid themselves of Marian, still the child must be brought up away from home as much as possible—in boarding schools, seminaries, college. By the time she attained maturity circumstances doubtless would be altered.

Thus it fell out that the Reverend Wilson Whittier, who sincerely loved the adopted waif, bowed his head and passed under the rod. Thus began that rigid ordering of his life that was to consummate in Hohenzollern autocracy. True, there had been moments when he had attempted to assert himself and depart from the strictly conventional existence which Mrs. Whittier and Ethel permitted him; but these always brought down such fierce domestic storms upon his head that he perforce abandoned them and at length meekly accepted the thorn as a divine castigation. Opposition, he early saw, meant interminable discord; domestic rupture would rend his parish; the bitter pill of resignation was forced between his lips, and he swallowed it in weak conciliation and tried to forget.

He thereafter sought compensation in greater devotion to his church. And amid his labors he did not omit to cast his eyes abroad for wider fields. His thought early went out to wealthy and aristocratic St. Jude's; and he began to cultivate certain of its supporters. An operation soon demanded the services of a specialist for Mrs. Whittier. Doctor Roake was summoned from Crestelridge. And shortly thereafter, upon the demise of the conservative old rector of St. Jude's, the doctor suggested to his friend, Senator Chaddock, who in turn transmitted the suggestion to the vestry, to be passed on to the bishop, that the Reverend Wilson Whittier be summoned to the charge—a summons that rang in Mrs. Whittier's well attuned ears like a call to Olympus. Marian was then in a seminary in Connecticut.

The Reverend Wilson Whittier came, with the skeleton rattling loudly in its inner closet. And for six years he applied himself with such vigor and consecration to his new charge that St. Jude's speedily became known as the most active religious force in the New England states. A new church edifice rose, backed by the Cragg, the Tellus, the Black, and the Kerl millions, a gray stone structure of more than fifty rooms and occupying an entire block in Crestelridge's most exclusive boulevard. Its magnificent marble auditorium comfortably seated more than 3,000 in richly upholstered mahogany pews; its great prayer meeting room accommodated another thousand in an environment of rare rugs and exquisite draperies; and its

three wonderful pipe organs could pour forth a volume of harmony that would rock the edifice to its deep foundations. The multitudinous social activities of the church were accommodated in dozens of thoroughly appointed work and committee rooms; in a banquet hall capable of seating upwards of a thousand persons; and in gymnasia for both sexes, with cinder tracks, swimming pools, and courts for various games and modes of recreation. Yet even this extensive plant was now proving inadequate for the rapidly expanding social activities of the church. The rolls, including those of the Sunday school and young people's societies, contained some 4,000 names. Card indexes were employed. Every home in Crestelridge and vicinity was listed, and the history of its family registered in more or less complete detail. This, again, at the suggestion of the systematic Doctor Roake, made through Senator Chaddock. And likewise at his suggestion, and now under his personal supervision, was maintained the thoroughly efficient system of visiting nurses. "Drives" of every sort befitting an industry of this kind originated in the club and committee rooms of St. Jude's, and were directed over solid mahogany desks and from costly tapestried chairs. An ambitious program was inaugurated for health and sanitation, as conceived by the eminent Doctor Roake; for citizenship as conceived by the Craggs, the Telluses, the Blacks, and the Kerls; for patriotism as likewise conceived by the same sane sense; for elaborate social functions and church services, the like of which doubtless had never before been attempted in the history of Protestantism. St. Jude's was indeed a factor to be reckoned with. And its rector became the embodiment of no slight power in the community. In a way, he was a small dictator, for he represented the dignity, the age, and the authority of organized religion. True, his appearance was somewhat less canonical than commercial, and his power was that which certain others of vast wealth delegated to him, rather than any power of the Spirit. Yet he was quite generally looked up to, respected, and deferred to; and if, in these years of his material success he had become a bit swelled, somewhat pompous in manner, and aggressive with all but the members of his own family, it was what his powerful supporters desired, and constituted a necessary part of the show for which they paid over their money.

Though he had seen but little of his adopted daughter Marian since, at the age of ten, she had been placed in a fashionable eastern boarding school, yet due to her influence more than to any other cause was his growing conviction that *something* was wrong with his own soul. And he had fought this conviction, fought it as he had fought nothing else in his

life of more than fifty years, for in its train he saw consequences that he simply could not face.

Yet he knew that he had struggled sincerely to take the Word literally; to believe in the utility of his church; to justify its activities, as well as its pageantry. And he had labored faithfully, not so much to make his congregation look through *his* eyes as himself to look through *theirs*. It was they who paid him, and he was therefore under the influence of their wishes. Following the dictation of the masters who held the purse-strings, he furnished them music, flowers, and ceremonies commensurate with their whims. St. Jude's became more and more a strictly social organization, its service a social rite, its rector a social entertainer whose sermons were far more often based on the newspapers than on the Word. . .

But he loved it all, this bustling material activity, this unique show, with himself as master of ceremonies. He loved his own reputation and that of his congregation as extreme ritualists. He loved his authority, his position among the finer clay of exclusive Crestelridge. And . . . But if only he could conquer the paralyzing fear that at times beset him! And but for his wife and Ethel he felt that he could.

Of late he had plunged more desperately into the things that his physical senses told him were real. He entered into business schemes with the rich traffickers of his congregation; he sought and used tips on the market; he at times cleaned up tidy sums, which he shared with his highly gratified wife and daughter. But he likewise gave more largely to charity—that is, until the lynx-eyed Mrs. Whittier discovered his largess and herself took charge of his benefactions: for Ethel was coming on now and would need whatever the reverend man could accumulate of worldly goods. . .

Then came Marian's return from college, a contingency for which he could never have been quite prepared. But where indeed should she go if not to the home of her parents by adoption? And the abrupt injection of this young woman of twenty-four years and revolutionary ideas into the staid circle of Crestelridge some six months before had caused a ripple that to the rector's terrified thought now seemed assuming the proportions of a tidal wave. . .

Immersed in discomforting reflections, he hung at the door of his study for some moments, with bowed head. Then he drew a deep sigh and went in.

CHAPTER 6

MARIAN turned as the rector entered and met him with a smile. She was standing beside the long study table, and the cold afternoon light that struggled through the thick art glass of the high Gothic windows was breaking and falling around her in a shower of color. Her tall, slender figure, drawn to its full height, was slightly suggestive of defiance; but the suggestion was neutralized by the warmth of the big brown eyes that she bent upon the rector, and by the wistful expression in her face. Again there surged up within him the impulse to blurt out his conviction that she had conquered, and that it was a victory of Right. Yet he dared not. And he yielded himself to his fear and his sense of injury and humiliation.

He drew out a chair and sank into it. "Marian!" he moaned, "words fail me. Oh, how could you? How *could* you?"

"Because I love him, father," she reiterated.

"Again you say that!" he exclaimed, rousing up. "How could you bring sorrow upon us all and then further embarrass us by that indelicate public confession of your infatuation for Alden!"

"Father," she answered gently, "you preach that the infinite God is love. You preach that we are His image and reflection. But the love that is God is infinite consideration. I have tried to reflect that consideration to Alden."

"But with *no* consideration for the rest of us!"

"His need was no greater than yours, I know, but it was more urgent. *His* danger seemed imminent."

"Rash impulse!" he cried. "The same thoughtlessness that has been exiling you from your fellow men! It is the heedless impulsiveness that has driven you into the shoals of liberalism and wrecked your future on the rocks of heresy! It was that zeal without wisdom that has ever made you endeavor to force the demonstration of your transcendental theories; that mesmeric form of evil that so subtly spread its lethal influence over me, until I yielded to your persuasion to compromise myself before my congregation this morning! Alas, with what sad, sad consequences!"

* * * * * *

It was the zeal—though he knew it not—that had driven her, in the enforced loneliness of boarding schools and seminaries, to turn from the void in her heart which the Whittiers

had refused to fill and seek a higher concept of parentage. It was the impulse that had caused her to adopt God.

It would have wrung the heart of even one so selfishly fearful as Mrs. Whittier to have seen the neglected child, in the early formative years of her life, walking alone and with her little arm outstretched in mimic embrasure of the hand of that unseen Presence whom she had appropriated as parent. It must have driven the skeleton from the harassed soul of the rector had he overheard the intimate conversations which the little one carried on, increasingly through the years, with that One behind the veil who was now Father, now Mother, to this friendless waif. Yet the rector fervently thanked that hidden One that the child appeared to be contented in her surroundings, nor pined for the fatherhood that he dared not give her.

The result of Marian's early substitution of God for her earthly parents was a spiritual intimacy that became permanent, increasing with the years. As time passed, there developed within her a desire to really know the invisible Parent whom she had adopted. This desire speedily became longing; and from that it flowered into a passionate life-motif. Thus was propounded in her expanding thought the most vital question ever voiced: "What is God?" The girl's life thereafter became a consistent search for the answer. And the answer came, yet not in words.

It was in those early years of intensive self-communion that an influence entered the child's life that was to shape it to ends beyond human anticipation. A woman, with snowy hair and the rosy face of a young girl, visited the school one bright spring day, and, with the preceptor's permission, distributed apples and small gifts. She appeared particularly interested in Marian, and asked that the child be allowed to drive with her on occasion, or spend a holiday in her home. From that climacteric hour a friendship developed between Marian and Madam Galuth that resulted in such close companionship that when the girl progressed from boarding school to seminary, and from thence to college, the woman likewise changed her residence in order to be with her. The great unseen Parent seemed to be manifesting to Marian in this motherly woman who thus early gathered the lone child to her bosom and filled her life with a radiance that the Whittiers could not have diffused.

It was Madam Galuth who neutralized in such large measure the baleful teaching imparted to Marian in school and college in the name of education. It was this woman who shielded the girl against that odious instruction in the fatal laws of fear which parent and teacher, in their mistaken, mesmeric beliefs,

deem necessary to impart to the young. Thus life's greatest handicap was strangled at its source, and Marian's instinct for accomplishment developed without let from that inner enemy whose commandment *"Thou Canst Not"* makes mankind the shuttlecock of Fate. Marian developed with a consciousness of power that, rightly directed, later expanded into spiritual audacity.

It was to Madam Galuth that the girl early went with her great questions. It was Madam Galuth who had ever a receptive ear and a ready answer, nor put her off with soporific sops of God's inscrutability. But it was Marian herself who, pondering the sources of her own conduct with a mentality happily free in large measure from the inhibitings of material beliefs, hit upon the metaphysical law—none more vital to mankind! —that *thought externalizes itself*. When it dawned upon her that she was never without a thought of some kind, and that her thought shaped her life, the paramount question of existence became: "What am I thinking?" At the point of conviction that the basis of *all* is mental, the girl began to let go the things of matter and deal only with thought.

Thereafter, and under Madam Galuth's careful direction, Marian sought to maintain a sharp line of demarcation between the "invisible things of Him" and the material "things that are made." Compromise became impossible. Either God must be all to her, or nothing. If nothing, then matter must take His place. She could not divide her interests between God and Mammon. But if she accepted God as all, then must she likewise accept the task of demonstrating the utter nothingness of matter. And in the face of the testimony of the physical senses this was an audacious emprise.

Yet clearly she saw that all inharmony, all discord, sickness, sin, death itself, took origin in matter or materialistic thought. Prove the impotence of this, and the error must vanish. Again Madam Galuth wisely pointed out that the only way error can get at mortals is through their thought. If therefore thought be challenged and properly sifted at the mind's portal, then a life of harmony must ensue. But for this sifting there must be the proper gauge, a principle by which to measure the thought that applies for admittance. That Principle must be Good. And Good is the synonym of Life and Mind and Love.

Launched thus on a distinctly metaphysical course, the girl's consuming passion for Truth carried her far. The cause of humanity's troubles? Of the world's woes? War? Disease? Naught but belief in a power opposed to that Principle. And salvation? The "laying off" of this same fell belief. Experience

had shown her—and Madam Galuth repeatedly emphasized the fact—that through every hour, every instant, a stream of thought was pouring into her mind, both good and evil; every instant she was rejecting the one sort and clinging to the other; and the one which she accepted as truth became externalized in conscious experience. Thus was all human life composed. But if the one sort was real, the other, its diametrical opposite, must be unreal. Fulness of life then, yea, the kingdom of heaven, was but a function of accepting the allness of that Principle which is Good, and the instant and constant rejection of its antithesis, matter and material modes, as baseless, non-creative, and unreal. Conversely, by knowing matter and its concomitants—discord, disease, death—as unreal, she would demonstrate the existence and allness of her Principle, God. This, then, early became the major premise from which the girl, under the woman's guidance, sought to deduce a logical and harmonious life-experience.

The girl's spiritual development was consistent, as far as lay within Madam Galuth to direct it. Building upon a foundation already well laid, the woman sought, not to shield the child from contact with evil, but rather to teach her that, on the premise of the allness of her Principle, Good—or God—evil must of sheer necessity be naught but the externalization of erroneous thought, itself the antithesis of true thought, and therefore without power or real existence, and having but the qualities with which the human mind endows it. She needed not to direct the child to Spirit, for thither Marian had turned naturally and intelligently. The child early began to see material objects as concepts of thought, and human men and women as material ideas externalized, and not in themselves the sons and daughters of God. Human life was by her regarded, not as real Life, but as a mere sense of existence, transient and false, whose inevitable end must needs be death. And all this quite apart from the real, which is eternal. The Christ to her became the saving Truth; and she saw that she must leave all for it. If Man was the reflection of Principle—the One perfect and eternal God—then must she appropriate that Principle to the fullest extent and throw her burden of material sense away. Her life activity must be a reflection of the activity of Principle; and that activity must be service in the highest degree. "If," she reasoned, "I am really the image and likeness of God, then I must *act* as possessing the power to meet every righteous requirement. If I hold to this, it will become externalized. Then shall I overcome evil, even death itself, yes, *death*." She set her life to correspond to the startling premise that "*Now* are we the sons of God," in reality, and treated her

associates accordingly. Death was not an end, nor the gateway to eternal bliss. It was an error to be overcome. This sense of existence, called human life, was to be regarded as a preparatory school wherein mortals would learn how to overcome, and prepare to advance farther on the next plane—if we may use the term—if death cannot be mastered here. Neglect to appropriate Principle, and by it work out one's salvation here, meant continual suffering in the bonds of materiality in another false sense of life until the task should be entered upon joyfully and carried through to completion, resulting in the revelation of Man as spiritual, and matter as the falsity of belief.

And the sustaining Principle was Love. Therefore she must love her brethren as herself, though they frowned upon her for her "queer notions," for her unwillingness to come under the false laws which they continuously laid upon themselves and would fain throw about her, and rejected her for her avoidance of the trifling aims and the frivolous, gossiping conversation which made up their little round of life. But this constituted her opportunity.

But, withal, the active, enthusiastic girl found it far easier to desire Truth than to rid herself of error. The working out from materiality meant strife. To acquire "that Mind," to possess a consciousness of Good only, she soon learned was a task that demanded absolute consecration and infinite patience. The former she possessed in abundance; the latter came slowly, and through painful experience. Her ebullient zeal led her often into situations difficult and embarrassing. Desiring wholeness above everything else, and eager to sacrifice her material sense of life for it, she concluded that all mankind must share her fine enthusiasm when enlightened. Believing that she had found the mental way of salvation—the spiritual road pointed out by the Master-metaphysician—she flew joyfully to her fellow men with her gospel of release from the mesmeric dream of life in matter. . .

Alas, the missiles which they hurled at her from atop the thick walls of dogma and human belief drove her staggering back with broken hopes.

"But," the white-haired, motherly woman whispered, as she gathered the sorrowing girl in her arms, "they have not broken your power to be spiritual, and by your spirituality to lift and illumine their poor lives." And the girl's thought went out to the despised Nazarene, and she recalled that the value of what he did lay not in teaching, but in act.

It had often been said of the girl by her wondering classmates that she was possessed of the "Scotch gift of second-

sight." Her intuition seemed to them uncanny. Yet to Madam Galuth it was but a developed spiritual insight. And when she successfully met physical ailments and various discords for herself and her associates, these regarded her with awe and felt afraid. Yet the girl was but obeying the Scriptural injunction: "Neglect not the gift that is in thee." She had learned, and was demonstrating the knowledge, that "the kingdom of heaven is not in word, but in power"—not in what one may say, but in *DEMONSTRATION*. But the thick and passive resistance of the mortal mind against Truth was soon manifest in the rebuke of her teachers, in whose opposition Madam Galuth saw reflected the ecclesiastical and *materia medica* thought of the hour.

Thereafter she directed Marian's efforts to the task of gaining a deeper understanding of the Principle that is God. The Bible became the girl's daily food; Madam Galuth her ever-present mentor. The tracing of Israel's history became a passion and a guiding chart. "Some day," the woman would say, "you will be sent to the Lost Tribes. Ah, the world little suspects where they are! But you shall find them, and to them you shall reveal spiritual Israel."

In due season Madam Galuth began to guide the girl's adolescent thought into new and strangely interesting channels. Marian was then in college, but with little taste for the worldly lore there imparted to her. Then Madam Galuth sent her to seminars, where she discussed matter with eminent physicists, philosophy with learned doctors, history with the greatest authorities of the day. She led her into the realms of Greek and Latin; she perfected her in the modern languages from her own rare mastery of the tongues. "For I have lived in France, in Germany, Spain, Africa . . . Ah, dearie, I've roved long . . . But not in vain; no, not in vain."

"But what is it all for?" the girl one day queried. And Madam Galuth turned to Milton and read aloud: "The end, then, of learning is to know God aright."

In her infrequent letters to the Whittiers—for she was not encouraged to write to them often nor at length—Marian seldom mentioned Madam Galuth. Thus the rector, absorbed in the ever expanding social activities of St. Jude's, remained in ignorance of the powerful influence shaping the girl's developing thought. And during the brief and rare visits to her family Marian learned that her views were offensive to them and quite undesired—nay, feared. But as time went on, the rector could not fail to become influenced by her really profound scholarship. And a sentiment of pride was thereby stimulated within him. Her mastery of the Greek impressed him greatly,

and at times he—quite surreptitiously—sought her translations of difficult Bible texts. Marian seized upon these occasions to render metaphysical translations which widened his eyes as he read. Later, they caused him uneasiness, and he fell to wondering if he had given sufficient thought to the welfare of the girl's soul. "I must guide your spiritual development," he then said to her. "You must join St. Jude's."

"But we think on different planes," she answered. "I am just as interested in my salvation as you are, but I know that it is to be accomplished only by a change of mentality. See, the word which you translate 'repentance' really means 'a complete and radical *change of thought*'. Now will wafers and wine change your mentality? Will money? Or pious theorizing? What will? Knowing the truth and applying it practically as Jesus taught and demonstrated. What did he see when the ten lepers stalked down the road toward him? He saw, not the error, not the disease, not the lie that said God was not infinite and perfect, oh, no! He saw the *real* Man back of all these material concepts. And that cured them, for it destroyed the lie about God that was being manifested by them."

And again: "Can a mentality be changed? Yes; not by your ritual, but by *true* education. The German mentality of to-day was fashioned during forty years of false education. What would have been the result of forty years of Truth imparted to them as Jesus taught and *proved* it to his disciples?"

Then her thought often dwelt on Alden Cragg. "What would Jesus see in him?" she would ask herself. And she would answer as Madam Galuth had taught her: "Not a cad, not a coward, not the false sense of man that will pass away. No; he would see what I must see and help Alden to bring out, the real Man back of it all. And as the Master solved their problems by loving them, so I must love, love, *love* them all!"

And she strove conscientiously to do so, despite her limited environment when in college or Crestelridge, despite the inertia of organized ecclesiasticism, the worldliness, the materialism, and the aggressive suggestions of power and life and intelligence inherent in evil, as lived and taught by the rector, who steadily rejected her views and showed her plainly that she must not push them too far, for when his thinking got beyond the strictly material he was hopelessly lost.

But the enthusiasm of a fresh, vigorous young mentality with a grasp of Truth is not readily quenched. After fourteen years apart from the Whittiers, Marian returned to them like a meteor bursting upon a darkened sky. She came beautiful in personality, radiant in sweetness of character. She

came with a rare mobility and sensitiveness of expression that held her zeal for the most part in check; yet with a compelling forcefulness which profoundly stirred all with whom she came in contact. She was essentially feminine, winning, yet audacious. She was quiet, even reserved, yet conveying always the impress of a potentiality unlimited if loosed. Her life expressed the essential nature of her thought in its totality as gauged by her Principle—and Crestelridge, bloated with matter, blinked up at her in protesting amaze.

* * * * * *

"Yes," she replied to the rector's bitter lament, "you did compromise yourself this morning. In the presence of David Barach who came yearning after Truth you made your usual obeisance before matter and sent him away empty."

"It is not of that Jew that I wish to speak," he returned severely, "but of Alden . . ."

"Alden, like the world, has been mesmerized, and through him evil is striking at the Word, as it is through you."

"Marian!"

"Oh," she cried, "can't you see? *can't* you see? The world is at war. The German nation has struck for supremacy. But can't you see *why* it has struck, and what is striking through it, and at what? It is only the age-old drive of evil against the Word. Error has been preparing Germany for years to be its tool . . . Why, mesmerism was first brought into notice in Germany; it came through Franz Mesmer to war against Truth! But Truth is set forth by the Bible; and so destructive criticism of the Bible naturally originated in Germany. It was mesmerism. And it has spread throughout the world. Now, with the German people fully mesmerized, it has struck through them at England, for she is the keeper of the literal Word. And it has struck to destroy *real* Christianity."

He turned a blank look upon her. "Why," he murmured in amazement, "the German people are *Christians!* They are our *kin!*"

"That is what is taught in our schools," she answered him; "but the Germans of to-day are not the same race as the ancient Germans, they are largely of Hunnish or Tartar origin. The people who lived in the country known to Cæsar as *Germania* passed on in large bulk to other countries, chiefly to England, and their former home was then occupied by the Sarmatians, the Huns, and other tribes. And these we now know to have descended from the ancient Assyrians, those fierce Chaldean worshipers of Bel who sought to destroy the true idea of God which Abraham preached forty centuries ago. It is the same to-day as in his time; evil, as yet undestroyed by you who

profess to know and do the works of the Christ, still strikes at the Word to kill it."

A pause followed, in which the rector sat staring dumbly at the girl. Then she resumed: "Alden is an Englishman. He disclaims any responsibility for the outcome of the war; but it is because he is under the spell of Franz Mesmer. This war is not one of governments only, not of nations or peoples, but of *principles*. Oh, can't you see that it is a war between the revived Roman Empire and the Anglo-Saxon race, and that it is at the Anglo-Saxons that evil, through the Kaiser, has struck? And because the Anglo-Saxons are keepers of the Word which error would destroy? Where then is Alden's responsibility? Where yours, as a preacher of the Word?"

Again she waited for his reply, but it did not come. She drew up a chair beside him. "When this war burst upon the world," she went on, "what did it find you doing? Preaching, in your blinding mesmerism, that civilization had been advanced to such a degree that there never could be another war! You preached that the world would wag on as usual, with now and then an application of 'Christian principles' to steady it! You cried 'Peace, peace,' when there was no peace! Your text was: 'We have walked to and fro through the earth, and behold, all the earth sitteth still and is at rest'—Oh, yes, the earth was at rest, in error; it was at ease, in matter! And you were complaisantly preaching Christianity as the hope of the race—but you couldn't say what Christianity was, nor how to apply its principles practically! No," as he made a gesture of protest; "else David Barach would not have left your church this morning with that hopeless look in his face!"

The rector gasped and made as if to rise. She checked him. "And where did the war find Alden?" she demanded. "Fleeing from his problem, fleeing to neutral America—from which he now intends to flee to Spain, a country steaming with the vapors of hidden German influences, and therefore just the place to which the mesmerism of evil would send him! I saw him enmeshed in such a coil! . . . Oh, I know you will not understand me! . . . you will say that I acted impulsively! . . . And I did . . . But the boy was lost! . . . Oh, it *had* to be!" she cried, springing up. "He *had* to be loosed from his bonds! There was no other way! And you . . . *you* will have to turn. . ."

"You ask me again to leave my church?" he interposed.

"All I ask is that you awake from your mesmerism, that you give up your attitude of strict neutrality or weak compromise toward error, and rouse to your opportunity, to your great destiny. Oh, you know I am right, for when evil, using

the prepared Germans as its tools, stalked across Belgium with a wake of horror, did you not bury your head still deeper in your churchly affairs? Oh, you continued to conduct your elaborate services; you beat your tom-toms and blew your horns, like the Indians, to scare away the evil spirits; you set up your images and offered material sacraments—and your congregation submitted to it all without a vestige of spirituality—for neither you nor they knew, in your awful mesmerism, that it was the same idolatry that centuries ago quenched the light of the primitive Christian Church. . ."

"You are critical, merely critical!" he burst out. "Like those who cannot create or mend, you charge the Church with dereliction whenever anything in our social system breaks under some tremendous strain! You launch a tirade, you become abusive! Your attitude is that of opposition to our principle of religious liberty! You have no regard for the rights of others . . ."

"It is your rights, and Alden's, and the world's, that I am contending for," she declared. "Your rights are invaded by the mesmerism that has blinded you. My criticism of you is sincere, for into your hands has been placed the keeping of the Word and its demonstration to mankind. You have been unfaithful. You have become a Laodicean. You have sought to deny us the privilege of demonstrating that here and now we are immortal. You have permitted mesmerism to cause you to strangle Truth in your pulpit, and to so pervert the Word that a starving world has fallen under the spell of Baal. Your pulpit does not appeal to humanity, your religion does not reach the man in the street. Oh, if you and Alden and all who have named the name of Christ had striven to know and demonstrate *real* Christianity, you would have met this evil of war before it could set the world aflame! Now you and he, not knowing how to war spiritually, must take the human steps necessary to preserve your liberty and save the Word. The Anglo-Saxons are not really Christian enough to defend themselves by spiritual means, they cannot use the divinely provided weapons that Paul enumerated, and so they must meet evil's drive with evil's own weapons. But they *must* meet it, or be destroyed!"

She came and bent over him, with an arm about his shoulders. "I do not mean to be unjustly critical, nor to offend," she said gently. "But these are such momentous days; and you and Alden and the world are so deeply asleep." Her eyes filled. "I love you," she continued tenderly. "I love Alden. I love all my fellow men. That is what makes me see so clearly your great danger. Oh, I want you to see that the

old world is passing away, that the things which you hold most sacred are doomed because they are not based on Principle! I want you to have the courage to forsake them and turn to that which will endure."

She reached out a hand and laid it on his. "You almost said last night that you would," she whispered.

He started up. "You came to me last night with the pernicious teachings of that Galuth woman!" he exclaimed. *"That* was indeed mesmerism!"

"I came to you," she answered, "with the command that came to Job, to gird up your loins like a man, for God demands of you to say on what your understanding of Him is based, whether on Spirit or its opposite, matter. This demand is made on all humanity, and never so insistently as to-day. Job was at last convinced that the government of the universe was not in what the physical senses reported it to be, but in a Power beyond and outside of matter and its manifestations. This Power is Spirit, God, Principle, never evil, never material. You believe in God; but how can you convince others that there *is* a God when you fail to *prove* Him? Jesus was constantly proving Him; but do you? Do the churches? Can you, or they? Oh, the world has set up the worship of science —but it is a false science, and with it mankind is destroying itself! It has made evil its science. And naught but the science of Christianity will overthrow it. But the churches do not make Christianity a science. To them it is still a speculation, still guess-work. Oh, God demands better things of you. His law demands progress. Alden has come under that law. You must, either willingly or under compulsion. You cannot remain here asleep under the spell of Franz Mesmer." She paused, then: "Father," she breathed, "come!"

The rector got to his feet. For a moment he stood looking at the girl; then he clasped his hands behind his back and began to pace the room with quick nervous steps. At length he stopped before her. "Do you realize what you have brought upon yourself by rashly forcing Alden into the army?" he said slowly.

"Yes," she answered in a low, wistful voice, "I must leave Crestelridge."

An exclamation burst from his lips. "You cannot! . . ." He glanced down at the papers on his table. His eyes fell upon the title of an address that he was preparing for the Young Men's Club: *"Choose Ye This Day Whom Ye Will Serve."* He started; his face flushed; he looked up at the waiting girl; then he turned and resumed his nervous pacing. Should he yield? Was the sacrifice which she had asked of him com-

mensurate with her own? He thought of his church, his lordly salary, his high position, his proud friends. . . And as he thought, he heard the ominous rattling of that bony thing closeted within. He shuddered. Then he came to her, with bowed head. "Marian," he said, "you are very young . . . yet some things that you have said are . . . true. Your rash conduct this day will probably rend my parish . . . but . . . it may be that it has opened the door . . ."

The telephone bell interrupted him. He started violently, then went to the instrument.

"Oh, Senator Chaddock? Yes, this is the rector . . . You say the physician was taken ill . . . Alden's examination postponed till to-morrow? Ah! What's that? Doctor Roake assures us that Alden will be kept in this country until the war ends? Surely! surely! Yes, it certainly *is* an honor to the young man to enlist! I congratulate him! And . . . Eh? . . . Colonel Tenn has permitted Alden to go home for the night? Wonderful! Er . . . you say Doctor Roake wishes to see me in his office in the morning? . . . Something in regard to my sermon to-day? H'm! Certainly, I will be there . . . Nothing serious, I hope . . . I am sure I can explain . . . No? I'm delighted! Thank you for calling me."

He hung up the receiver and turned to Marian with an altered countenance. "If the boy is accepted he will be given employment in some camp here!" he exclaimed, his eyes dancing. "So far from becoming a scandal, his enlistment redounds to our credit . . . really!"

He smiled, he chuckled, he laughed aloud in his immense relief. His eagerness was pathetic. Then his face became serious as he glanced again at Marian. "A happy and unexpected result of your thoughtless conduct, daughter," he said. "May it be a warning to you. And let me again remind you of your immaturity of thought and of the great necessity of ridding yourself of the destructive opinions which you so constantly voice. You have all the audacity and self-assertion of the young college graduate; age will bring you wisdom. Er . . . there is no need of further discussion of the matter."

Thus closed another phase of the age-old clash between priest and prophet. The girl stood looking at him pityingly for a moment, then turned and in silence left the study.

Without, the prospect was unspeakably dreary. The wind was still whirling clouds of dead leaves through the deserted streets. And the fury stirred by the Christ was in like manner driving a mesmerized people who still refused to forsake their idols of clay.

That night, while the cold stars above Mt. Ararat looked

down upon the stark bodies of a thousand fresh victims of the great mesmerism, the self-blindered Craggs sat chatting affably with Doctor Roake and living over again those first ecstatic moments when he had assured them of Alden's undoubted immunity; the deluded rector and his wife huddled close, hugging their gnawing secrets; Marian paced the floor of her room, pondering "those things which must shortly come to pass"; Ethel, in the parlor below, laughed carelessly with Harris Chaddock and Ted Sayor over "movies" and dress, parties and drives, and her growing ability to roll cigarettes and consume them; and David Barach, the apostate Jew, kept lonely vigil at the bedside of his moaning wife.

CHAPTER 7

WHEN morning dawned David Barach rose from his chair with a twofold resolve: he would that day see Alden Cragg and Doctor Roake. All barriers had fallen before the urgency of his beloved wife's condition, which old Doctor Benson had declared with shaking head to be beyond his own simple skill. A child was expected—the consummation of months of joyful, trembling anticipation—but something had gone wrong. Doctor Benson was too observant of professional etiquette to attribute it to the fanciful notions of the obstetrician whom Barach had employed, but he had well grounded suspicions that this young man's ultra-modern methods of assisting Nature had brought the poor woman to such a state that nothing short of a highly complicated major operation could save her. And in this extremity Barach's daring thought had flown to Doctor Roake, world-famed specialist in the treatment of women's diseases.

True, Doctor Roake was an extremely busy man, with a clientele now composed almost exclusively of Crestelridge's redundantly rich; and his fees were enormous. But there was the chance that he might take this case for a clinic if proper influence could be brought to bear upon him, such influence, for example, as that of the Craggs. Of course there was the County Hospital, malodorous and clouded by suspicion of harsh treatment meted out to charity patients; but Barach had not the courage to suggest *that* place to this delicate, nerve-wracked woman, whom the mere mention of hospitals threw into a frenzy of fear. No, his plan was best: he would offer his Primal Motors stock to the Craggs, thus secure their mediation, and . . .

Moreover, his holdings in Primal Motors probably depended upon the Craggs, for he had heard it rumored that their money was expected to finance a reorganization of the company and give value to its now inactive stock. If he offered his stock to the Craggs he was certain, under the stressful circumstances, that they would purchase it, even if at a low figure, and thereby supply him with funds to place in Doctor Roake's hands.

Primal Motors, be it understood, was a Tellus contraption, with David Barach as a lowly cog. The company had been floated by Henry Tellus and a few club cronies immediately after the opposing armies in Europe had dug themselves in and a war of long duration was assured, the basic idea being that of stock-jobbing on war contracts which Senator Chaddock was confident he could secure. After the company had idled through a few uneventful months, David Barach appeared in the office of President Tellus one day with the model of a gas motor, and asked for financial aid to exploit it. The practical Tellus rightly appraised the value of the machine at once, and he lost no time securing it. Barach was offered $50,000 in the capital stock of the company for his invention, and given a position in the engineering department of the concern; but to show his good faith he was required to invest outright the insignificant sum of $2,500 in the stock of the company—an insignificant sum, indeed, to residents of Crestelridge, but a fortune to Barach, and not to be raised without hypothecating his earthly all. But $50,000 in stock! And an association with Crestelridge's gentility! . . .

And still Primal Motors continued inert. And debts accumulated, much faster than to Barach seemed reasonable. He at length exercised his privilege of examining the company's books; but discovered nothing amiss, and succeeded only in rendering himself annoying. But shortly thereafter he heard that the enormous Cragg wealth was to be drawn upon to resuscitate the enterprise; and he almost sobbed in relief. At last, he told his wife, he was made! And thus it stood, day after day, without apparent change, while each Saturday night he would draw his small stipend in an envelope bearing the excellent admonition *Do Not Spend All Your Income*, and on his return from the markets would endure torturing hours wondering how he could meet the interest on his notes and provide for his delicate wife and the babe that was coming. But always he fell back upon the bemusing assurance that men of the Tellus-Cragg ilk would never permit that stock to become debased.

Only for the chrysalis state of his thought, David Barach

might have sought and found comfort among his own people. But because the narrowing influence of Judaic tradition had spent itself upon his forebears, long residents of liberal America, he had come into the world a protest against their system. From the belittling conviction of his people that they were the "chosen," with the only true God their exclusive possession, he had swung to the position of a creedless seeker for Truth, without chart or rudder, adrift on a sea of fathomless uncertainty. His protest grew with the years, until it became an unconscious intolerance that drove him aloof from his race. Their dogged adherence to a past filled with hatred and persecution, their present passive submission to the contempt of Christian civilization, as well as their own sensuous thought and densely materialistic aims, irritated him beyond measure, and gradually alienated him from their communion. On the other hand, he acquired among them the reputation of apostate and radical, whose extreme liberalism was fraught with perils dire.

Without anchorage or port, the man's liberated thought could not but drift into every vagrant current. He became a familiar object in public reading-rooms and lecture halls, where at length he received the contemptuous patronymic of "Wandering Jew." Yet librarians marveled at his omnivorous and widely discursive reading; and professors gasped over the erudite letters with which he challenged them, and which, though annoying, often gave stimulus to serious thought because of their deep and subtle questionings. Prior to the disturbing incident at Sarajevo he had been fitfully practicing law before the New York bar; but, failing to secure the confidence of his own people by reason of his unorthodox assertions and because of his greater interest in other subjects than the law, his practice never grew, and he at length definitely abandoned it and gave himself up to his hobby of invention. His studies now were principally in the physical sciences and their practical application. He was a skilled mathematician; his knowledge of chemistry and physics was almost exhaustive; his imagination was keen; his inventive faculty highly developed. Such a one could experience no difficulty securing employment; his lay rather in holding himself to the positions that necessity obliged him to take. David Barach was an idealist, a dreamer, but not a man of affairs.

But with the acceptance of his motor by the Tellus organization he believed he saw the door of financial independence swing wide; with the breaking out of the World War his thought glided into metaphysical channels. It was then—though he knew it not—that he became the Jew again seeking the Messiah.

He hesitated as he stood by his wife's bedside that morning and looked down at her face, so white that there seemed no demarcation between it and the pillow against which it lay. "Fear not, my dove," he whispered bravely, bending over her. "Our stock will provide for us. The Craggs are Christian gentlefolk."

And then regret smote him, for the look in her eyes voiced her protest against his contemplated appeal to the Christians. For Barach's wife, a consistent Jewess, lived in the past, adhered to and reverenced its traditions, without thought of determining their value in the scales of Truth. The apathy of generations of sluggish indifference lay not upon her: she inherited an active hatred for the religion of the Gentiles, an ill-feeling toward the founder of Christianity that was as sacred to her as the ancient Scripture. The old rabbi, whom she had again called to her side the night before, had long and carefully nurtured this inheritance. With deep solemnity he dwelt often and exhaustively upon the Jewish pronouncement against Christianity. The Nazianzen lacked human fatherhood; he made himself the equal of God; and the cross—it was the hideous symbol of retributive justice! He declaimed strongly against Christianity because its twenty centuries of civilization had estranged the love of man. The condition of the Jew throughout Europe was not a Jewish, but a Christian question, nor could it obtain if Christianity meant what its adherents so stoutly claimed for it.

That the Christian religion was a mere faith without works, David Barach did not attempt to refute. But in the name of justice he believed that the murderous hatred which the Jews of the first century cherished for the unique man who rebuked their own barren beliefs should not be handed down through succeeding generations. To the rabbi's solemn pronouncements he opposed the fact that Jesus really appeared to fulfil the prophecy of Isaiah. As to his alleged self-deification, it was plainly written that "I can of mine own self do nothing; the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works." As for the cross, the guilty conscience of the Jews who slaughtered the Nazianzen had developed an abhorrence of the symbol of their criminal act that has been transmitted to all posterity. As for the ancient Hebrew traditions, the promises and prophecies, had they not failed utterly? Plain it was that the good things of this life were in the hands of the Gentiles. Therefore, there must be a reason, perhaps a demonstrable law. And he would seek it. If the Messiah were yet to come, it certainly appeared as if he would come among the Gentiles.

"So! Sleep, my dove. I will be absent from the shop to-

day, for I will see young Cragg and the good Doctor Roake, and I will return to my dove within an hour. These Christians have hearts. So, my loyal little Jewess, sleep and dream that your babe will be the Messiah! Who knows?" Then, with a final word of instruction to the young girl who was to remain with his wife, he hurried away. He had made no mention of his disappointing visit to St. Jude's the preceding day. A half hour later he stood, breathless, before the massive, richly wrought gate that barred entrance to beautiful "Craggmont."

The Craggs in America differed no whit from the Craggs in England. In either place their environment accurately mirrored their souls. A lodge stood just within the great gate, and its surly keeper bristled before Barach like an English mastiff.

"But it is business, sir," Barach courteously explained.

"What business can the likes of you have *here?*" was the gruff retort.

"I am bringing Mr. Cragg some certificates of stock . . ."

"Did he send for you? Does he know you're coming? Got an appointment? No? Then you'll stay outside till you get one—an' that'll be too long f'r you to wait."

In vain did Barach protest and plead. The obdurate keeper threatened to summon the police. Slowly the Jew turned from the Gentile's gate with a heart of lead. But of a sudden he halted. Then, under the impulsion of an idea, he broke into a run. A mile from "Craggmont" he found a drug store and a public telephone. He hurried in and seized the directory. A few moments of eager scanning, and he let it fall with a smothered cry. The Craggs were not listed.

He left the place and turned aimlessly up the street; but abruptly he wheeled and ran back into the store and to the booth. Could "Information" tell him if Mr. Alden Cragg . . .?

He was advised that if he would state his business he might be placed in communication with Mr. Cragg's residence. His heart leaped high. A few moments later he was eagerly explaining his call to the highly indifferent individual who served Alden Cragg in the capacity of secretary. "And tell him, please, that it is David Barach, a stockholder in Primal Motors," he reiterated. Then he stood back and waited, his blood pounding through his arteries, until the secretary returned and requested him, in a tone a bit more tolerant, to repeat his name. Ah, how swiftly the clouds were now rolling back! The God of his fathers . . .

The secretary's cold voice came through the receiver. "Mr. Cragg wishes me to say that he is not interested."

Barach fell back stunned. Then he returned to the instru-

ment in an abandon of fear. Again and again he strove wildly, but vainly, to get into communication with "Craggmont." His strange conduct attracted the storekeeper, who went to the door and called to a passing policeman. The latter, a hulking brute, stalked to the booth, jerked open the door, and dragged Barach violently out.

"What's th' big idea, Israel?" he demanded, drawing his club.

"My wife . . .!" Barach gasped. "She's sick!"

"Well, my Gawd!" the officer commented in a tone of disgust, and shoving Barach toward the door, "ye don't need to be bustin' th' instrement! Git out an' hike f'r a doctor, or I'll ride ye in th' wagon!" Dense fool! How could he know that the Jew was seeking the healing Christ? He stood in the doorway, watching Barach, as the latter, after seeming to grope blindly for a moment, hurried off in the direction of the Cragg mansion. "I think I'll follow that guy," he remarked grimly, with a squint and a nod to the storekeeper. "He was kiddin' me."

Through Barach's feverish thought there ran an insistent strain: if he could but see Alden Cragg personally the apparent misunderstanding would be speedily corrected. But his former rebuff warned him not to apply again to the lodge-keeper, and he therefore halted panting, on the corner, some distance from the gate. Perhaps the Craggs would drive out . . .

But he could not wait for that! He turned and started down the side street. The Cragg property occupied a full city block, and was entirely surrounded by a high and exquisitely fashioned iron fence, costing, Barach well knew, enough to keep him and his in comfort the rest of their lives. Over this were trailed flowering vines in great profusion, and so dense was the massed foliage that in places the fence was quite concealed.

He stopped and stood staring at the fence. Then he glanced furtively about and across the street. Again he turned, and with quick movements plunged into a particularly heavy mass of foliage, where he clung, breathless, peering out through the leaves. Satisfied that he had not been observed, he seized the iron pickets and, keeping himself concealed beneath the vines, worked his way slowly up and across, and dropped to the ground on the opposite side. A few moments later he stood at the massive glass doors of the main entrance, with a finger nervously lifting the ornate lever of the electric call.

In despite of Doctor Roake's comforting assurance and the clear demonstration of his influence, resulting in Colonel Tenn's permission to Alden to return to his home for the night, Mrs.

Cragg and her son had slept but little, and the unseasonably early hour of eight discovered them in the breakfast room, pecking fitfully at the iced cantaloup or nibbling without zest the delicate hot biscuit.

"Hawkes hasn't learned yet when a bath is cool or tepid," Alden was muttering, in a vain endeavor to forget the disgrace of yesterday. "And when I rang for my tub this morning the bally idiot was asleep! I shall give him a character!"

"English valets always lose their usefulness after a few months in America," Mrs. Cragg remarked listlessly, tasting her egg and then irritably pushing it aside.

"But the American valet *never* knows his place," said Alden. "He . . . I say, call Jedkins, please; this coffee is gutter-water! What's ailing our servants, do you suppose? Has the war . . ."

His voice trailed off as he caught the rebuke in his mother's eyes. Then he pulled himself up. "I say," he began, and with an assumption of confidence, "I've got it all figured out; I've been worked on . . . influenced, you know."

"What do you mean?" asked his mother, with a show of genuine interest.

"Well, this country is great for—what do ye call it?—occult stuff, and all that . . . hypnotism, ye know. Now Marian . . ."

"Don't mention that girl in my presence again!" his mother interrupted sharply.

"But, mother," the boy persisted, "I've got it all worked out. She's been seeing a lot of that questionable character, that Galuth woman . . . By Jove! what's told me about this person should have put me on my guard! She, this Galuth creature, is a—what d' ye call it?—necromancer, or such. An oriental person, or something of the kind. Lived in Egypt. Marian has learned hypnotism of her. And she used it on me yesterday . . . put me to sleep with her suggestions. I didn't know what I was doing. Why, she even threatened to . . ." But the youth forebore to reveal the girl's words, even as he had consistently done when quizzed by Doctor Roake and his mother after his return from the recruiting office. "But, I say," he resumed after a pause, "you can just figure that that Galuth person is at the bottom of the whole bally mess, and that's my theory."

Mrs. Cragg became deeply thoughtful. It certainly was probable that Marian's inquiring mind should have yielded to this malign influence and become a channel for its transmission to the unsuspecting and therefore unprotected Alden. From what sinister motive of the Galuth's, she could not say;

but the theory at least might prove useful in the unthinkable event that Alden should be forced into service. On the other hand, assuming his immunity, she had evolved a plan during her waking hours that night whereby her son, avoiding disgrace, should immediately acquire a reputation for patriotism, in that he, a Cragg, having seen his country's need, had nobly responded—though, alas! he would be denied the privilege of active service because of his delicate health . . .

At that moment Squires, the young man's secretary, appeared with Barach's message. "I didn't quite get the name, sir," the secretary announced; "sounded like Warruck. But he wished to offer you his stock in Primal Motors, sir."

"Warruck," Alden pondered; "War . . . I say, it wasn't Barach, was it?"

"I'll go back and inquire more particularly, sir. He's holding the wire."

The secretary left mother and son exchanging inquiring glances. Mention of Barach's name brought swiftly back to them the affront of yesterday. "That Jew is one of our tenants," said Mrs. Cragg grimly. "Have Squires instruct our agent to raise his rent immediately and evict him. I will not rent to that class of people! The impudent tramp, to sit with us yesterday!"

"The working classes are bally cocky of late," Alden agreed.

"And where would they be but for us who employ them?" his mother continued heatedly. "I shall instruct Mr. Tellus to discharge him from the employ of Primal Motors. Now . . ."

But Squires had returned with further details. "Name is David Barach, sir. He states that it is necessary to raise funds on account of his wife's illness, and he offers his stock in Primal Motors at your own figure, sir."

Mrs. Cragg stiffened as he spoke. When he concluded, she waved him away. "Tell him, Squires," she said in glacial tones, "that Mr. Cragg is not interested. Think of it!" she exclaimed, when she and Alden were again alone. "The audacity of the wretch! Tell Squires to get Mr. Tellus on the wire. That fellow must be discharged to-day!"

"But, I say," the son ventured, "we're going to put money into that concern, ye know, to reorganize it, and so on. Capital idea to buy this fellow's stock for five cents on the dollar, don't you think?"

"It will not be necessary to buy any of the stock. We shall acquire the company by assuming its debts," she informed him coldly.

"But, I say, that leaves Barach's stock worthless, eh?"

"He deserves the punishment. He deliberately publicly

insulted us yesterday." And Alden knew that for an offense to a Cragg there was no atonement. David Barach should be punished, but less for this affront than for the humiliating fact that but for Jewish capital "Cragg Cut Tobacco" and the immense fortune derived therefrom would have been impossible. Alden's father had had no scruples regarding race. He shamelessly borrowed funds where they were to be found. And Alden's friends had not foreborne to press this sensitive point when they learned of its existence. True, Cragg fame became international, the business world wide; the family now had holdings in every European country and the Americas; yet Alden continued to hang his proud head when the badinage of Ted Sayor and that ilk dangled before him the Jewish origin of his vast wealth. . .

For Alden Cragg's life had been a consistent manifestation of a most intolerant belief, namely, that he had been constituted of finer clay and divinely set apart from his fellow men. Yet in this he but reflected his mother's dominating thought, for her strong mentality had been his life mentor. His father had not counted as a determining force in the molding of Alden's character; he had died in the boy's sixth year. His life had been steeped in commercialism; and when his tremendous but uncontrolled driving force at last burst the arteries in his throbbing brain, his wife and son found themselves so absorbed in each other that they could not miss him.

For many years thereafter mother and son had been wont to leave "the intellectual, artistic, and sensitive atmosphere of England, with its constant reminders of a glorious tradition," as Mrs. Cragg put it, and descend at frequent intervals into the ruck of New York, with its blatant mobs and its polyglot of undeveloped, unattached ideals, and this they did for reasons of business and Alden's health. Not that the boy was an invalid; but, smothered beneath the fears and ministrations of an adoring mother, and without trials to meet or obstacles to overcome, he had grown up like a delicate plant, and his anemic condition—a condition wholly fanciful—at times gave rise to an irritability and moroseness that found relief only in a radical change of environment. In England they had come into frequent contact with their distant relatives, the Whittiers. A close friendship developed, which was continued after the young rector and his bride removed to America. Thus, eventually, Mrs. Cragg found it expedient to establish a home in Crestelridge, near the Whittiers, and where Alden could remain under the watchful eye of their good friend, Doctor Roake, and there to pass much of her time—although she and Alden never let it be thought for a moment that they regarded Amer-

ica with anything more than tolerance. To them it remained always undignified, unpolished, and crude. Crestelridge society became acceptable only upon imbibing the Cragg ideals, even as Crestelridge architecture became normal only when patterned after stately "Craggmont."

It is probable that Alden Cragg would have been classified as a throw-back to an older and now vanished England. In descent he boasted himself a Norman, though when Marian once informed him that the Normans were the modern descendants of the tribe of Benjamin he angrily resented the imputation. "You'll find the name of my ancestor in the Domesday Book," he asserted disdainfully; "Rolf Cragg came over with William the Conqueror. And I'll have you to know that I'm no bally Jew!"

Partly because of their proud ancestry, but more especially on account of their great material wealth, the Craggs secured and maintained a position of what they were pleased to regard as "splendid isolation." Of the various gods in the American pantheon, they chose to worship Mammon. The scissors with which they clipped their coupons were kept ever sharp and bright by constant use. Daily Alden and his mother met with their bankers and secretaries, their attorneys and counselors; and hourly, as their riches grew, did their contempt for their fellow men increase. Their money was proof incontrovertible of their superiority. In their riches lay their security, though in their worship of gold they lost all feeling for what is genuine in life. Mrs. Cragg's thought was centered in her son; his was absorbed in a contemplation of self. His material selfhood became his microcosm. From incessant introspection developed his cruel criticism of others, his constricting selfishness, his heartless conduct toward his fellow men. While those of the Barach type sweat to augment the Cragg fortune, Alden lounged at his club, drove his luxurious car, or mingled in the social activities of St. Jude's, despising the horny hands that supported him in the leisured class of which he was such a highly developed type.

But of late the Cragg world had swerved a bit in its orbit, and clouds had lowered menacingly about its far horizon. Yet when the German fury was loosed in the autumn of 1914, what recourse had the terrified mother but to act upon the suggestion of her adviser, Senator Chaddock, so closely in touch with international matters, and close her London home, transfer her affairs there to her army of agents and barristers, and flee with her idolized son to the protecting arms of the United States? Time would surely approve her action; for, let it be repeated, Alden Cragg was not common clay!

Thus Mrs. Cragg sat musing in her boudoir after her scarcely touched breakfast, when one of her maids came flying to her with the disquieting report that a man had come hurriedly across the lawn and was now at the front doors. Mrs. Cragg rose quickly and hastened down to the entrance hall, where Alden and the servants stood peering timidly out through the glass doors.

"Stand back, Alden!" she cried in a hoarse whisper. "Do not expose yourself!"

"See!" whispered a maid; "the lodge-keeper is running up the walk with a policeman!"

"It's that . . . that Barach fellow!" muttered Alden, his heart thumping madly. "He's insane!"

Thus they waited until the miserable Jew had been seized by his pursuers. Then Mrs. Cragg, again motioning Alden back, commanded the butler to open the door.

"He was actin' strange in th' drugstore, Ma'am," explained the policeman, touching his cap. "I followed him and seen him go over th' fence. He's a Rooshun 'Red' all right! Where's y'r bomb, son?" addressing Barach. "Easy there, Israel!" as Barach began to struggle in the officer's clutch.

"Let him speak," said Mrs. Cragg. Then, to Barach: "You are the fellow who made a disturbance in our church yesterday, are you not? The one who came down and crowded into our pew with us?"

"Is he so!" murmured the properly shocked policeman, turning his condemning gaze upon Barach.

The latter's eyes widened. "Why . . . I do not remember . . . doing that!" he gasped.

"Oh, I recognize you," said Mrs. Cragg, her nostrils dilating and her lips curling. "May I ask why you are persecuting us?" she concluded in a freezing tone.

"Persecuting! Madam, it is not that! My wife is sick! I thought Mr. Cragg would buy my stock . . ."

"You were informed over the 'phone that he was not interested."

"But I hoped he would take it and use his influence with Doctor Roake!"

"He's plum off!" gasped the officer.

"If you need aid, there are charitable societies here," said Mrs. Cragg in tones that distilled ice.

"An' th' County Horspitel," the policeman put in. "Aw, y'r dodge won't work, son!"

"She would die there! And I could not ask for charity!" Barach cried. "Not while I had this stock! If I could talk with Mr. Cragg I could explain!"

"Could you explain why you climbed our fence like a thief?" Mrs. Cragg demanded.

"The lodge-keeper would not let me through the gate!"

"He was wild-like, Ma'am!" the keeper exclaimed. "I knew he meant trouble!"

"That will do," said Mrs. Cragg, in a voice as hard as steel. "Take him away, Officer. Have him examined by a magistrate." With which she turned and swept into the house.

"But, Madam!" cried Barach. "Hear me! God of our fathers! don't you believe me?"

A tap from the policeman's club turned him about. A sense of the magnitude of his calamity bereft him of his wits. With a despairing cry he struggled to free himself from the officer's grip. The club crashed down upon his head. He dropped senseless and was dragged away, while the wide-eyed inmates of "Craggmont" watched with bated breath from behind the glass doors.

CHAPTER 8

DOCTOR ROAKE did not permit Senator Chaddock to return to Washington Sunday night, as intended, for the unexpected enlistment of Alden Cragg had imposed an additional task upon the extremely popular physician and he had need of his henchman. Thus, while David Barach had been waging his unequal struggle that bleak Monday, the doctor and senator were comfortably composed in huge, tapestried armchairs in the doctor's exquisitely appointed private office in close conference.

"I don't mind telling you, Roake," the senator complained, "that young Cragg's enlistment is not only a shock but a great disappointment to me. I . . . er . . . Well, it is bound to raise his prestige, and if he is accepted and kept in this country, why, Ethel Whittier will marry him. At present she favors my son Harris. Egad! what a weakling Cragg is! . . . Or else Marian has some sort of hold . . . You know, you said she was a real thinker . . ."

"Did you inform her that America was about to enter the war?" the doctor asked, looking searchingly at the senator.

"No. I swear, I told no one but the Craggs . . . and they assured me they did not divulge the information."

"A clever girl," the doctor said meditatively. "Wonderful ability; charming personality; remarkable in many respects. But . . . with zeal beyond her wisdom, don't you think so, Chaddock?" He threw the senator an odd look as he made this observation.

"Decidedly!" the latter agreed vehemently. "Else she would not oppose you!"

The doctor laughed softly. "Her opposition is . . . refreshing," he said.

"Of course, with America going into the war, you can now regard Marian as negligible," the senator conceded, after which he sat for some moments in thought. Then: "I have been thinking it over, Roake, and I believe I see now why you wanted this war. It gives the medical profession the grandest opportunity it ever had—an opportunity to so firmly establish itself that nothing short of a revolution can ever break its power. And yet, the medical profession appeared to be immovably established before."

"Not at all," the doctor returned quickly, yet kindly. "In fact, Chaddock, until this war broke out there was a real medical crisis in this country, because of what I had long seen developing: we were being Prussianized. German educational ideas were so dominating our institutions that they were turning out hopelessly inefficient graduates. Naturally, people in time would refuse to employ these and would turn to substitutes, would lose faith in doctors and try the various mental cures. Now that sort of thing, carried too far, would . . ."

"I see, I see," the senator interrupted, vigorously nodding his entire comprehension. "H'm! And when America goes in . . . I say, Roake, you don't mind my saying this, but you fellows are going to strike for further medical control, eh? In fact, you've already struck: the Wess bill gives the medical profession absolute police power, and you know it."

The doctor removed his cigar from his mouth and appeared to study it for some moments. Then he looked up at the senator with a half smile. "The Wess bill does appear susceptible of a somewhat latitudinous construction," he admitted, in his deep, velvety voice.

"Egad!" the senator ejaculated, "it gives you medics the right to enter *any* home—for *any* purpose—under the guise of medical inspection!"

The doctor coughed slightly before replying. "But you must remember," he offered, "that our Constitution provides security for the citizen in his home against unreasonable seizures."

The senator broke into a laugh. "And in such cases the medical profession decides what is unreasonable, eh?" he cried. "I guess after the war the old-fashioned idea that an individual has the right to control his own body will become obsolete."

The doctor did not reply, and the two sat for some moments silent. Then the senator again took up the conversation.

"Roake," he began hesitatingly, "I . . . well, the fact is—to change the subject abruptly—I'm in a bad way financially. Swamped with debts. Harris has bled me white . . . He hasn't much of a practice yet . . . just bought a new car . . . I was hoping he would marry Ethel Whittier . . ." He ceased speaking and sat back in gloomy meditation.

The doctor regarded his companion steadily for a moment. "Well," he observed at length, "when the Wess bill becomes a law we intend to have Harris appointed Health Executive."

The senator again became animated. "Egad!" he ejaculated, "that bill *must* go through! But it will take barrels of money!"

"I have provided for that," the doctor assured him, then regarding him quixotically while he awaited the senator's further comment.

"H'm! . . . And young Cragg, will he continue to contribute now, you think? Egad! that girl turned a trick yesterday."

The doctor laughed lightly and shrugged his shoulders. But then he became serious and sat reflecting, while the smoke from his cigar rose about him like a gray mist. His thought had reverted to one of his many early tilts with the girl. He had said to her: "You believe in the power of thought. So do I. Mental suggestion is omnipotent."

"But not the suggestion of evil," she quickly combated.

"You are mistaken," he replied. "The sort of suggestion that you are pleased to regard as evil is *all* potent."

She studied him closely before returning an answer, as was so generally her wont. Then, with a little laugh, she said: "You are a real Philistine; that remark shows it. Oh, didn't you know it? Yes, for your remote ancestors lived in Egypt. They were at one time followers of that wonderful priest-king, Melchisedec."

He stared at her blankly. "Lived in Egypt!" he muttered. Then he forced a laugh. "Explain," he begged, "for I am not an Oriental, but an Irishman, Jeremiah Roake."

"Yes," she returned with animation, "but you came from the south of Ireland. Well, the ancient followers of Melchisedec —whose name in Greek is Philitis—finally abandoned the true religion which he taught and went after strange gods. These Philistines eventually settled in the south of Ireland, where their descendants are to be found to-day. You are one of them."

"And have I gone after strange gods? But what is the true religion that you say I have abandoned?" he asked, endeavoring to conceal his surprise.

"The religion that Good is infinite and omnipotent," she replied.

"Ah! But it is just *that* by which I shall test my opposing theory."

"It is just *that*," she gave back quickly, "that will destroy your theory."

And thus, he recalled, had the lists been drawn and that combat launched which had now appeared to reach its climax. It was a combat that has had its types through countless centuries in the unbroken struggle of evil to overcome good, even down to the titanic effort of that same pseudo power operating through its German minions and their mesmerized allies to destroy the Word.

Yet in Marian Whittier's antithetical views Jeremiah Roake felt that he had discovered exactly those combative elements which he required to test his own. By matching these against hers he would try them out, retain those which withstood the test, and issue from the experiment in possession of proven powers—mental, of course—that would give him conquest over his fellow men.

A telephone call shook the doctor out of his revery. "From the police station, Doctor," his operator informed him. "The lieutenant says a man named David Barach, now being held there, has called for you. Says his wife is critically ill, and asks if you will attend her."

The doctor turned in surprise to the senator. "Why," the latter had exclaimed aloud on hearing the doctor repeat the name, "that's the Jew who made the disturbance in church yesterday that I was telling you about! Been arrested, eh? Egad! it was only a question of time."

"Tell the lieutenant," the doctor instructed his operator, "that I cannot take the case."

The doctor leaned back in his chair and fell to studying the senator. "The world," he began, after a long pause, and with his thought again busy with Marian Whittier, "is emerging from the era of man-power, of animal-power, of steam, electricity, and oil. It is passing rapidly from the use of material forces to the development of the hidden forces of the mind. Marian showed yesterday how potent these may be by persuading Alden to enlist. She believed she was employing the power of what she would call good thought. As a matter of fact, her thinking in this case was potent only because it worked evil, as the world knows evil." He paused again and seemed to muse, scarce noting the senator's presence. "We are all of us," he resumed at length, "constantly played upon, controlled, directed by mental forces. He who learns the laws of mental control and uses them, instead of permitting himself to be used *by* them, will dominate the world."

The senator laughed, but, as was of late become his wont whenever the doctor was on this particular subject, a bit nervously. "That has become an obsession with you, Roake," he declared. "Always talking about it, but never demonstrating it. Moreover, you don't appear to realize that in attributing all power to the mind you are refuting your own belief in the efficacy of material remedies."

"I have no belief in the efficacy of material remedies," the doctor replied slowly. "Only fools believe such drivel. The power that a drug seems to possess is really in the mind that believes the power to be in the drug. That mind is merely hypnotized by its belief. It is demonstrable that it is the patient's belief that gives power to medicine."

"Ah," Chaddock returned with a dry chuckle, "then alcohol of itself does not produce intoxication, eh? I've got you there, Roake!"

The doctor did not reply. Instead, he pressed a button which summoned his small office boy. "A glass of water, Willie," he instructed the lad. The boy complied, Senator Chaddock meanwhile watching the proceedings with ever widening eyes. "Stand there," the doctor bade the boy. Then he bent forward and riveted his eyes to those of the child. "That is strong wine in that glass," he said at length, in a clear steady tone. "Drink it." The little fellow obeyed. For a while the doctor held him spellbound. "Walk over to that door," he then commanded. The boy staggered away, swaying as if under alcoholic control. Then the doctor recalled the lad and quickly brought him out of the hypnotic state and dismissed him. "Well?" he demanded, turning again to the senator.

"It is . . . mental manipulation!" the senator gasped.

"But the boy was intoxicated, wasn't he?" the doctor pursued. "Moreover, I can in the same manner produce the effect of any drug whatsoever on the human system, through the action of the mind alone."

"It . . . it is a . . . *terrible* power, Roake! It is criminal! You shouldn't employ it! Did . . . did you learn this in . . . in Egypt?"

The doctor laughed easily. "What you have just witnessed, Chaddock," he said reassuringly, "was merely a crude exhibition of mesmerism. But mental suggestion of the aggressive sort is a vastly more potent and subtle power, though often less immediate in its effects. Everybody uses it—though for the most part unconsciously; and everybody is used by it. But few control it or use it understandingly. The day is past, Chaddock, when one needs use brute force to gain one's ends. I repeat, had the German leaders seen that, and stuck to their

mental manipulation, they would soon have dominated the world. Our future wars will be mental wars—that is, mental science will conduct them. The weapons will be increasingly mental. That is foreshadowed in the present war. Poisonous gas is a much more subtle form of matter than a club, for example; it approximates much more closely the mental; a vastly greater amount of thinking is required to compound a poisonous gas than to whittle a club. And the product of mental effort is always mental. What makes our modern shells so terribly destructive? The explosion of gas, you say. And gas, I repeat, is a form of matter so subtle that it is almost mental. And so it will go on, until brute force will be a thing of the past, and victory in war will rest with that side whose thinking is the most aggressive and powerful. Future wars will result in the destruction of entire armies, in the wiping out of whole cities, states—or the blotting out of an entire race. It can be done. And it will . . . But enough of this," he abruptly concluded, turning to his desk. "However," he added, "remember that the man who resorts to brute force nowadays is a fool."

"But . . . just a moment . . ." The senator seemed slow to recover from the awe which the doctor's experiment had inspired. "Egad!" he exclaimed at length, "I wish you'd mentally suggest to the examining physician to reject young Cragg! If we could send him to Spain for a few months, while Harris . . ."

The doctor interrupted with a little laugh. "But," he said, "if Alden should marry Ethel Whittier, the Penberry heiress, and then some one—some one who greatly admires Mrs. Cragg and her great business acumen—should step in and marry the combined Cragg-Penberry fortune, why . . ."

"Egad! that's so!" murmured the senator. Then he glanced up and found himself looking into the doctor's deep black eyes. It startled him, and he hung there, silent, while the doctor, who had now settled back in his chair, continued to study him fixedly.

For some moments the senator's face bore a quizzical expression; at times his lips pursed. Then, as the doctor's eyes searched him, a look of fear came into his own, as if born of the realization of an awful and unseen power into whose tentacles he was being slowly, irresistibly drawn. His cheerfulness vanished. A chill gripped him. He made as if to rise, but the doctor's eyes seemed to push him back into his chair.

At length he relaxed, the fear dissipated, and he sat staring dully, for his thought had become confused, and he had no desire to speak or to resist. Then he became aware of the

doctor's voice. But it sounded hollow, and seemed to come from an infinite distance. True, he reflected, with Alden abroad . . . his mother alone and needing protection . . . it was a vast estate to handle . . .

Yes, the doctor did always have his interests at heart . . . But how dreadfully messy his thought was! Yes, he could see now that it would be advisable not to interfere between Alden and Ethel Whittier. It would be easier to control Alden than his own son Harris. Alden was weaker. But Mrs. Cragg might marry . . . Why had he not given more thought to that contingency? It was a menace! . . . But how warm the room had become! It made him dreadfully sleepy. Roake should give more thought to ventilation. And the sky must be clouding . . .

"Have a cigar, Chaddock!"

Something snapped. The senator started, half rose from his chair, seized the proffered cigar, and sat back, staring.

"What's the matter?" he heard the doctor say. "Bilious?"

"I . . . dozed," he murmured apologetically, "while you were talking." He glanced about fearfully.

The doctor consulted his watch, then rose. "I'll have to let you go now," he said genially. "Father Whittier is due. But, as we were saying, Mrs. Cragg certainly is carrying a tremendous load . . . and alone." And as he watched the senator depart his eyes gleamed, and the corners of his mouth slightly curled.

CHAPTER 9

AS the Reverend Wilson Whittier was being driven to his appointment—Ethel at the wheel and swathed in sables—he was forced to admit that of the early life of Crestelridge's great benefactor, Dr. Jeremiah Roake, he knew but little. Senator Chaddock, who for many years had boasted of his intimacy with the renowned doctor, was wont to relate that when he himself took up residence in Washington, Roake was established there and had already acquired a considerable reputation for coolly accepting chances that appalled his older and more experienced medical associates. "For," the senator would say, "by a rare combination of professional skill and an inexplicable mental influence which he was able to exert upon his patients, he succeeded where they had abandoned hope." Yet the senator was obliged to admit that when summoned to attend upon Mrs. Chaddock the doctor had utterly failed. "But," he would offer in explanation in later years, "I now believe

the extraordinary interest which he appeared to manifest in me, whom he then met for the first time, caused him—quite unintentionally, you understand—to neglect my dear wife's case. Egad! he quizzed and studied me for hours at a stretch!"

As for the senator, the Reverend Wilson Whittier knew that *his* record was an open book. Years gone, he had served several terms in the upper legislative house of his native western state, where his exceptional powers of oratory and his astuteness in framing laws acceptable to his constituency gave presage of a distinguished career. In due time he secured election as congressman from his district. Following the death of Mrs. Chaddock, Doctor Roake had almost immediately left Washington, not to return for nearly five years. Then he sought out the senator—a matter of which the latter never ceased to boast—and began an association with him that continued with increasing intimacy as time went on. His five years of absence from Washington, it later transpired, had been passed in India, Egypt, and Germany.

Again in Washington, the doctor's work became still more daring, and his reputation and influence proportionately increased. "Wealth and prestige poured upon my friend Roake like a mountain torrent," the senator proudly averred. Also, what the senator appeared not to see, and yet what the doctor seemingly desired far more than these, came increasing power over his fellow men. In time he was called to the faculties of various schools; but these alluring invitations he invariably declined, for some unexplained reason—unless, as a sage old army surgeon put it, "He has secrets that he can't impart indiscriminately."

On the date of the doctor's return to Washington the senator's career apparently ended. He was never elected to the Senate, although he continued to bear the appellation of "Senator" as a hold-over from his younger days. Yet he remained always a conspicuous figure about the Capital; and he exercised an influence upon various members of Congress that attracted comment. Washington continued to be his place of residence, and he still conducted a large and expensive establishment there and entertained lavishly, maintaining himself on terms of easy familiarity with politicians, ambassadors, and the leaders of successive administrations, quite irrespective of party. Of late, however, he had spent much time in Crestelridge—although this may be explained by the fact that he had become, through the doctor's influence, counsellor to the Craggs.

It had always remained a mystery to the Reverend Wilson Whittier—and never greater than on this Monday morning—

why the doctor had abandoned his extensive practice in Washington and taken up residence in Crestelridge. Yet this was no less explicable than the doctor's strange conduct when Ethel was smitten with that terrible illness years before; for, while his patient hovered under the dark shadow, the doctor had appeared fascinated by Marian, who was spending one of her brief vacations at home, and had seemed much more interested in her and her unorthodox views than in the delicate and complex operation which he was delaying because of her. Marian was beautiful, sparkling, frank, ingenuous, the rector admitted. Doctor Roake was big of frame, physically handsome, dark, mysterious, brooding. He had attracted the girl, the rector knew. And the delightfully radical girl had captivated him—yet the rector could not say why. . .

His thought was still busy with these musings as he entered the doctor's extensive suite and was at once ushered into the private office.

"Ah, and how are you this morning?" the doctor genially greeted him, coming forward with outstretched hand.

The rector took the proffered hand nervously. "Not at all well, Doctor," he replied huskily, as he turned and sank into the deep chair which the doctor indicated. "Overwork, I think. And, in addition, I caught cold from the fog of Saturday night."

"Better have your tonsils removed," the doctor advised. "I'll arrange for the operation. Let's see . . ."

"Er . . . but, Doctor, do you really think I need it?" the rector interposed in a startled voice.

"Can't do any harm," the doctor returned easily. "They are useless, you know."

"But . . . I have heard of . . . of disagreeable results."

"Oh, there is a slight fatality. About eleven per cent, I believe. Probably your disposition to rheumatism is due to your tonsils; possibly to your teeth. We'll know when the tonsils are removed."

"Er . . . yes, I see. I'll advise with you later in regard to it, Doctor. Er . . . Senator Chaddock informed me," he hurried on, "that you wished to speak of the . . . er . . . my announcement of yesterday."

"Just so," the doctor answered, seating himself and going at once to the point. "I am sorry that you should have allowed yourself to offend so many of your congregation by that sermon. Several have mentioned the matter to me already—showing how far-reaching were your words."

The rector twisted uneasily in his chair. "How unfortunate," he exclaimed, "that one should be so misunderstood!"

"Unfortunate, indeed!" the doctor agreed, as he closely

watched the play of emotions in the rector's face. "But it clearly indicates that this is hardly a time to experiment with so illusive a theory as that of spiritual healing. Don't you think so? The world will not follow along that path, but will continue to adhere to that which can be seen, heard, felt."

"True," the rector murmured. "But I had no intention of advocating a mere theory. I . . . I was desirous only of . . . obeying the commands of Christ."

"You were deceived by the very illusiveness of what you really had no intention of advocating," said the doctor. "Now the point that you really wished to establish is, that religion and healing are inextricably bound together . . ."

"Ah!" the rector could not but exclaim eagerly.

". . . indeed, are identical. But for the present, until world-health can be more approximately established, the people will most readily accept the domination of the healing element; and therefore our systems of religion must continue somewhat longer to be governed by our systems of healing. But that necessarily means continuance of the control of religion by *materia medica,* inasmuch as the people still almost universally look to *materia medica* for relief and protection from disease. Few turn in sickness to any form of religion, is it not so?"

The rector nodded the irrefutability of the doctor's logic and array of facts, and the latter continued, the low sound of his steadily flowing words resembling the murmur of deep waters. "Failure to establish world-health has resulted from a dissipation of energy. Therefore there should be a concentration upon one system—and that should be the one most generally accepted, namely, *materia medica.* But, inasmuch as healing is in essence an element of religion, it should be a function of the Church. Yet, until the ministers of the Gospel shall have been properly trained in the curative arts, the responsible doctor must work with them. And this brings me to my final point: there must be brought about a world union of the Christian churches operating in conjunction with and under the temporary guidance of the world's physicians. Now," he concluded, sitting back, "had you advanced *this* practical idea from your pulpit yesterday it would have met with immediate and general acceptance."

"True . . . yes . . . and yet, Doctor, drugs fail. . ."

"Who has spoken of drugs?" the doctor asked, smiling.

The rector looked at him questioningly. "Do I understand," he slowly asked, "that you admit that the Church's long neglected function of healing should be revived?"

"Certainly. As it is, you preachers are decidedly *not* obeying the commands of Christ to heal the sick . . . are you?

But if you could show the people that you were obeying this command, why, the world would flock to you! The Church's long neglected function of healing *must* be revived—or the churches must close their doors. And we physicians stand waiting to assist you preachers to revive it."

"But . . . not with . . . drugs?"

"We will teach the people to pass gradually from belief in the power of material remedies to mental power. Does it not amount to this: that we must teach them to yield their control to us who alone are able to help them? At first—just as we are already doing—we must resort to legal enactments for control, and to prevent healing by suggestion—which Marian so unwisely employs—and to eliminate the confused and misunderstood mental practices of other eager but ignorant enthusiasts. Legal coercion is necessary, at present, since certain of the people are adverse to admitting the benefits of such measures as, for example, the Wess bill, or the movement for a Department of Public Health, and thereby obstruct, unwittingly, the progress of world-health. Gradually, as they become educated and, like timid children, drop their fears, we shall guide them without further resort to the law. Possibly then we shall say that we heal by spiritual means—but to employ that term now would only result in frightening the people and alienating their support. You see that, of course."

"True," the rector again admitted.

"Now I am aware, as the vestry pointed out to you yesterday, that you have been misled by—well, let us say plainly, by theories such as those advanced by your daughter Marian."

"Er . . . but, Doctor! . . ."

The doctor smiled and held up a restraining hand. "Let the dear child have her theories, I say; but do not permit your superior reasoning powers to become entangled in them. She is bright, clever, with a keen, active mind. She has hit upon several well-recognized facts—for example, that of the *mental* nature of matter . . ."

"Yes, yes!" the rector interrupted animatedly, yet scarce crediting his sense of hearing.

"But, pshaw!" the doctor went on, still smiling, "that is a truth discovered when the world was young. Plato, centuries ago, regarded matter as a mental phenomenon, a state of consciousness, or mind. In looking at that book, for example, you see nothing outside of yourself; you see but a picture within your mind. And it is demonstrable that the five physical senses do not report to us the existence of anything outside, but only the contents of our own minds. We really see, hear, feel, touch, and smell only our own thoughts. Of course you

know that. Then why permit this zealous girl—as delighted over her chance encounter with this ancient truth as a child with a new toy—why permit her, I say, to upset your staid judgment and place you in danger of losing your church?"

"Then you, Doctor . . . you admit that the material world exists only as mental concept?" the rector almost gasped.

"Certainly," the doctor laughed, as if greatly enjoying the rector's perturbation. "Natural science concedes that matter is merely a phenomenon produced by the human mind, or, let us say, by material energy. All is mind and mind's mental phenomena. Why, that is one of the most clearly demonstrated facts of existence!"

"But . . . then you don't believe in God?"

"I believe in a power back of everything. I believe that power to be mental. Call it God, if you wish. Without such a belief, God becomes inscrutable, unknowable. Is your theological belief any nobler or more practical? Surely you know that you can no longer cling to a medieval concept of God that is commensurate with the absurd concept of angels as creatures with human bodies and feathers!"

"But . . . but where in your theory does God come in?" stammered the rector.

"Let us say that He created the human mind, or minds, if you wish."

"And gave them power to choose between good and evil, as the Scripture saith?" the rector put in eagerly, still clinging to the shreds of his ancient faith. "Yes, yes! and if all is within the mind, then the curative arts exist there."

"Exactly," the doctor corroborated. "Why, all my work is mental. Let the patient believe in the reality of a material universe and the power of material remedies, I say, until he slowly learns better, but do not try to shock him out of his beliefs. Can you make a baby give up its doll by reasoning with it?"

He leaned toward the rector and regarded him steadily. "That is why I say," he continued seriously, "that you and I must combine our endeavors, though ostensibly proceeding much as we are at present, and still yielding the curative work to the physician until we are able to hand it over to the Church, where, I concede, it properly belongs. I advocate, as I have said, a world union of the churches and physicians. I see no reason . . ." He paused and looked steadily into the dilated eyes of the rector. "I see no reason why we, you and I, should not at once launch such a plan; I, to organize the physicians; and you, to become the spiritual head—under my direction only as concerns the healing work for the present—

of this vast and potent religious force for the betterment, the uplift, the welfare of all mankind. In such a position I see you in your rightful place. Yes, for you are 'High Church,' and therefore almost Catholic; and you are Protestant at the same time. You stand on the dividing line. Therefore you are eminently fitted to represent both Catholics and Protestants in this plan. The Craggs will be with us, and the Telluses, the Kerls, the Blacks, with their great moral and financial support. And a world is waiting for us . . . Why, this war has prepared the world as nothing else could! *Now* is the psychological moment for such a world-embracing religious scheme. And I have sent for you to-day to ask if you see the opportunity and are ready to embrace it."

He paused again for his words to sink in. Then, apparently satisfied, he went on. "Your opportunity to correct the misapprehension due to your yesterday's sermon will come on Easter Sunday. I will prepare a brief statement for you to make, and to which you will adhere should any opposition arise. That statement will suffice for everybody, Marian included. Let her hear it, but do not discuss it with her or seek her views. Remember, we are mature men; she is a child—but a dear child, to be tenderly protected and guided and loved . . . but she must be restrained. Now I will stand by you to meet any protest which your sermon of yesterday may raise. In fact, I have already explained it to several; and I have prepared here," taking a typewritten paper from the table, "a statement which I have already sent to the newspapers in your name and covering the matter. It will appear in this afternoon's issues."

The rector raised his moist eyes to the doctor's. "I am grateful," he murmured.

"Moreover," the doctor went on, watching the rector's face carefully, "I am lending my influence to nullify Marian's work with young Cragg. You see, you need me now. On the other hand, I need you, to bring the healing work into the Church and through it to reach the people."

The rector's eyes began to blaze with new life. Relief was written large across his eager face. "I understand what you mean, Doctor!" he cried. "You wish me to present this matter of church unity, as you shall outline it, to the Triennial General Convention! Yes, yes! But, let me tell you," he added, laughing almost hysterically, "that I have long cherished this same idea! Indeed I have!"

The doctor smiled. "I have no doubt of it," he agreed pleasantly. "But now," turning again to his table and taking up other papers, "I will outline my plan, briefly, and let you go, for I have a luncheon engagement, an important one."

CHAPTER 10

PRECISELY at high noon of that Monday Ted Sayor was gently awakened by his valet in his curtained chamber in the International Club, and, after the usual process of yawning, stretching, and eye-rubbing, was solicitously assisted to his carefully slippered feet and started upon his day.

"What's weather, Boots?" he asked sleepily. "Raw and cloudy still? Bah!" he growled, "I'm sick of this climate . . . nine months winter and three months late in the fall! Any mail?"

The valet handed him several letters on a silver server. With few exceptions, the envelopes bore feminine handwriting and exhaled delicate odors.

"You asked me to remind you, sir, that you are lunching with Doctor Roake to-day at one," the valet very discreetly said.

"Thanks, Boots." Ted sorted over the numerous letters and began to open those that looked most promising. "Ah, a sweet little scrawl from lovely Madeline Nence. Can I take her for a drive to-morrow afternoon . . . See what I have on to-morrow afternoon, Boots. H'm! Louise Black again!" he murmured over another of the letters. "Getting insistent, eh? It's her mercenary mother. I've never given her any encouragement. Mrs. Kerl? Tut, tut! So naughty to write me! And here's one with the Cragg arms." He opened it. "Informal at 'Craggmont,' to meet the eminent economic writer, Emil Spildoski . . . Rot! He's a redflagger. Going to tell us how poor, down-trodden Germany was scandalously attacked by rabid little Belgium at the wicked instigation of naughty France. He'd say England if he weren't speaking in 'Craggmont.' How the deuce can Mrs. Cragg lend herself to this open anti-British propaganda?"

"You have an engagement at the theater with Miss Allen for to-morrow afternoon, sir," the valet announced, after scanning Ted's social calendar.

"Oh! so? See if there's a note about taking her to dinner afterward, Boots."

"No, sir. You are to take Miss Jackie Tellus to dinner at Leroux's, sir. Table's engaged, sir. You remember . . ."

"Y-e-a." Ted yawned and stretched himself again. Then he bent over and emitted a little groan. "Come here and rub my back, Boots. There . . . about the middle. Um-m-m! Do

you know, Boots," while the flunkey was vigorously complying with his master's request, "there's a new idea now, that all your troubles are due to your backbone? Fact. Doesn't matter what ails you . . . er . . . er . . ." as the rubbing proceeded, "it's all due to your spinal cord getting pinched in the joints of your backbone."

"That so, sir?"

"Y-e-a. You don't go to the doctor any more and say: 'Doc, my liver's jazzed up,' or 'My stomach's getting familiar with my front teeth.' Nope. All you say nowadays is: 'Doc, I'm feeling like hell!' and he rolls you over on your face and unhooks the kinks in your spine and you hop up and hand him a hundred-dollar bill and . . . There, that'll do, Boots."

He straightened up and started toward the bathroom. "Did you forget again to put the violet salts in the bath? And . . . Close that window! I've just been reading Doctor Roake's pamphlet on draughts, and I tell you, Boots, you can't be too careful these days. They're having influenza in Spain, and the doctors are coaxing it over here by scaring us with these pamphlets."

"Quite right, sir," the valet agreed, as he hastened to close the window.

"You know, Boots," the loquacious Ted rattled on, "it frightens me to think how careless I've always been about the public health! I was reading just last night in that little booklet Roake sent me . . . There, on that table . . . Bring it here."

The valet complied, and Ted continued his comments as he meandered toward his bath. "Issued by the Public Health Service. That's Roake, Boots."

"Yes, sir. Quite right, sir."

"Tells here how to make your vacations safe. I'm going to let you have a little vacation this summer, Boots—if we *have* any summer—and you ought to post up! Your sanitary condition, Boots, that's the important item. If you don't do anything more than get your sanitary arrangements fixed up before you start home you'll be doing all right. Let's see," scanning the booklet, "you locate your tents where they won't be too hot or too cold or too draughty or too . . . Y-e-a; then you build a wooden floor, and screen your tent and the cook tent all 'round, and then dig a trench about them both, and . . . You must take along bandages, and drugs, and a medicine cabinet, a hot water bottle or two, an ice pack, a clinical thermometer, remedies for bullet wounds, for poison ivy, for snake bite, for drowning—better not go where there's deep water, Boots. Don't go where there's *any* water on account

of the mosquitoes . . . you'll get fever. And don't forget the salves for bruises, and the stuff for chiggers, and the headache powders, and the salts, and . . . Boots, if you value your life, don't camp where you can't reach a doctor by telephone!"

"I believe, sir, if it's all the same to you, sir, I will not take a vacation this summer," the valet said.

Ted laughed. "Oh, well, go ahead with your vacation, Boots. That stuff isn't law yet. But I'll tell you what, it *will* be law if Roake gets his way. And I believe he's going to get it. So better take your vacation early, Boots, while you can enjoy yourself. Here, help me with this blamed shower!"

The International Club of Crestelridge regarded Ted Sayor as an inheritance. His father had bequeathed him, some ten years prior, along with the quarter of a million which he had left to this, his favorite club. At that time Ted was just twenty, motherless, and already well established in a career of philandering. He was now rich, high born according to Crestelridge appraisal, Chesterfieldian in manner, and more than ever devoted to the cause of fascinating the female of the species. But even among his severest critics he was cordially received because of his sunny optimism, his ready wit, and his nonchalant attitude toward everything that the silly old world has been prone to regard as serious. He lived luxuriously at the club, which he in turn regarded as his birthright, and, being happily free of business or other serious interests, divided his time between it and milady's salon.

Philandering was to Ted a perfectly legitimate vocation. "I am good-looking," he would say to his reflection in his triple mirrors; "I am bright—I can put it all over these brainless society fops!—and everybody likes me. Why shouldn't I devote myself to making people happy?"

And in this he was not wholly selfish, for he was really possessed of a sincere desire to please, deriving his own pleasure from the "good times" he afforded others, even though the "others" were most frequently of the opposite sex. True, he was often an exasperation to practical mothers, who came to regard him as a mere loiterer in the courts of love: for, though he spent his money royally upon their marriageable daughters, he certainly wasted their precious time. But even these admitted his great worth to society, and his invaluable aid to every Crestelridge hostess in the successful conduct of the elaborate functions for which that gilded suburb was so deservedly reputed.

Mentally, Ted was a drifter. Though endowed with a mind keenly analytical, its synthetic powers had remained undeveloped, for the reason that, being redundantly supplied with this

world's goods, there was lacking the necessary stimulus to endeavor. And yet, though his life was pitiably barren, had his soul been stripped of its social veneer there would have been disclosed certain convictions that had not been arrived at but by long meditation on an extensive acquaintance with the human mind. The most profound of these convictions was that the affairs of men are governed by chance. Because of this he denied progress. He denied intelligent causation. He styled himself an atheist.

When the great enigma of life began to oppress Ted, he took his problems to the pastor of the church to which his father had given liberally. "Ah, but you are too young, Ted, to be worried by these great questions," the kindly old gentleman had said. "Go to our Sunday school, accept what is taught you there, and the conviction will come."

But it did not, and simply because Ted did not accept what was taught there. Then he was sent to college, only to abandon it, the year his father died, in the belief that the expenditure of mental effort demanded was not worth while. Young as he was, human knowledge appeared to him a senseless accumulation whose end was chaos. His problems had narrowed down to one. And that one he took to the Reverend Wilson Whittier.

"No, Ted," the rector assured him, "God did not create evil. But certain of His created beings—angels they were—elected to do evil rather than good. These fallen beings then tempted mankind. Thus evil sprang into existence, although, as you see, never directly created by God."

The young man shook his head. He did *not* see. "That makes the Creator more wicked than the beings He created," he declared.

"But," urged the rector, "to deny that God could create free moral agents is to deny that He is omnipotent. To admit that God could create free moral beings, and yet to deny that some of these did elect to do evil rather than good, is to deny Scripture as well as the facts of everyday life."

"But . . . why?" the youth persisted.

"Ah, you must not ask. The ways of the Almighty are inscrutable. Yet He uses even evil, even sickness, sin, death itself, for His own good purposes. But from these He has, in His infinite wisdom, provided salvation. By accepting Christ we find that God looks through him at us; for God to have seen him do the works and fulfil the law is even better than for Him to see us do it. The purpose of life is to teach us to do good. But how can we recognize good without first knowing evil? How can we know what is true without first knowing what is false?"

"Do you believe in hell?"

"Why, the scheme of salvation makes hell a necessity."

"And that is what you preach?"

"Yes, Ted."

"You are 'High Church,' and you change wafers and wine into the flesh and blood of Jesus, don't you?"

"That is a very vital part of our service."

"And so your congregation are cannibals, eh?"

"Why, Ted!"

Ted left the reverend gentleman, and as he closed the study door behind him his offended intelligence found expression in a single word: "Rot!"

Thereupon Ted abandoned his search for the spiritual, and floated out on the wings of material sense. "Why worry about those things?" he asked himself. "It's a good old world. As for Whittier's theology, well, those who find consolation in it are poor-spirited creatures, so why disillusion them? Yes, the average of the world's mentality *is* below that of a ten-year-old child! Whittier proves it." And yet there remained with him a feeling that the rector had been evasive. "If he'd only say what he really thinks," he mused. "And I believe he would if he thought he could get away with it." And in his heart he despised the rector thereafter.

In Marian Whittier Ted discovered a critical mind that greatly attracted him. "I believe," he was wont to say, "that she began where the Church left off." But during her infrequent visits to Crestelridge he saw little of her—Mrs. Whittier studiously kept the girl in the background, while forcing her own daughter Ethel aggressively to the fore. "But she's a high-class, high-spirited lass," he would muse. "A high stepper, who will never become a Whittier door-mat. We'll hear from her." And this morning, as he loitered through the performance of his complicated toilet, he admitted to himself that Crestelridge *had* heard from the girl since her return from college, and in quite unmistakable terms.

"Funny world, eh, Boots?" he commented, as he stood before the pier glass in his dressing room some minutes later and repeatedly adjusted his hat at various angles to secure the best effect.

"Quite right, sir, quite right," the loyal lackey returned.

"What do the morning papers say about the war?"

"Terrible fighting, sir."

"Ah," Ted murmured, surveying his hat from a new angle, "how these Christians do love one another! Boots, I've discovered a new religion. It's what the Germans call a 'Prayer Ersatz'—substitute for Christianity. They're great for substi-

tutes, you know. Well, you go through a lot of bodily and mental uplift movements every morning on rising; then baths, deep breathing, and exercises of several sorts; then you read poetry, sing, and dance, after which you place yourself comfortably in an easy chair and contemplate truly artistic objects of art for a while—you've got to have plenty of time for all this, or else get up early. Then, when you're through with that, you get down to real business: the training of the will by auto-suggestion. When you get your will-power sufficiently developed, you begin to practice control over others, and . . . Hang this hat! Now, what do you think of it in that position, eh?"

"If I might advise, sir, I would tilt it just the fraction of an inch to the right, sir."

"H'm! Yes, that is better." Ted removed the hat and re-adjusted it to his head several times, the valet simultaneously moving the mirrors so as to afford him a view on all sides. "Decidedly better, Boots. But this cravat swears at the hat. Get me another."

"He looked again and sighed, and set
His cravat string and sighed again,
And combed his periwig, sighed
A third time, and then took snuff,
I guess to show the whiteness of his hand."

"I purchased a dozen for you yesterday, sir, as your supply was getting low," the valet answered, going to a drawer and extracting a handful of ties of various weaves and colors.

Ted gave them a cursory glance. The valet continued apologetically: "I was obliged to pay more for these, sir, eight dollars each. I got the last ones for six apiece. But the war . . ."

"Don't talk costs, Boots," Ted admonished.

"Yes, sir; quite so, sir. I was about to say, sir, that I placed an order for a half dozen pairs of shoes for you, sir, yesterday afternoon. They will come a little under fifty dollars a pair, sir . . ."

"Forget it, Boots!" cried Ted. "I don't care if they were a thousand dollars a pair! Come, get me into this cravat," selecting one and handing it to the valet, who began to adjust it. "Not so tight . . . There, see, you've left a little wrinkle on that side! Take it off and have it ironed out. You're so careless . . . And I particularly wanted to wear this one."

"But, sir," protested the nervous valet, "I am sure I can tie it again so no one would see . . ."

"Did you ever know me to put on a cravat twice without having it pressed?" Ted asked coldly. "I shall not begin now, even if these are war times."

For Ted Sayor's sartorial code was as rigid as Median law. Every article of his apparel was made to order after carefully wrought designs, always a trifle *outré*, upon which he would expend days of concentrated thought. He had been known to spend a full week deciding between two almost identical weaves of shirting, and a month hovering between two samples of cloth for a simple pair of trousers. The fabrics for his clothes had always been imported, and from all parts of the world. Even his hats were made to order, after designs and samples of materials had been submitted to him for approval. He had, after much experimentation, hit upon twenty as the proper number of suits of clothes to have constantly in his wardrobe to meet every ordinary demand; and he was seldom known to wear a suit again after it had been in his possession a month. Shoes were frequently discarded after a week's service. Of shirts, he kept a full fifty always on hand, and he never put one on the second time without having it laundered. After the third laundering the shirt was discarded. He never sent collars to the laundry: he wore each collar once, then threw it away. Whither his discarded garments went, he knew not nor cared; that matter was delegated to his faithful valet, with full power to act.

"Now let's try the hat again, Boots," he said, after another cravat had been painstakingly selected and tied by the patient valet.

He carefully adjusted the hat and once more surveyed himself critically in the mirrors. "Bah!" he finally exclaimed in deep disgust. "Here, take the thing! Don't let me ever see it again!" He jerked off the offending headgear and tossed it to the valet. The hat had cost seventy-five dollars and had never been worn. "Bring me an ecru derby," he commanded, "to match this tie."

This hat proving satisfactory, Ted removed it from his head and proceeded to spend a full quarter of an hour before the mirrors with it on his arm, trying for the most effective manner of carrying it. Then he whistled lightly and began to parade back and forth, scrutinizing his reflection for possible corrections.

But of a sudden he stopped short, and the whistling died away. He passed a hand over his forehead and stood for a moment in thought. "The owl of melancholia," he said aloud. "I can't shoo it from my soul." He glanced at the valet. "Boots," he said, "did you ever hear of mental manipulation?"

"Why, no, sir; but I can inquire, sir, if you wish."

"Well, I feel as if somebody were working on me now. Who do you suppose it is?"

"I . . . I can't say, sir. But I will endeavor to ascertain, sir."

Ted laughed and pulled himself together. "Don't addle your simple brain over it, Boots," he said. "Now where am I going to lunch?"

"If you will recall, sir, I reminded you that you were to lunch with Doctor Roake."

Ted stood looking at the valet. "Doctor Roake?" he repeated slowly, and in an undertone. "Oh," he said without meaning. Then he turned and went out.

In the grill below, Ted found Doctor Roake awaiting him. "Awfully sorry to have kept you waiting, Doc," Ted apologized; "but read your meter and I'll settle the bill. And, anyway, how can you waste your precious time lunching with a loafer like me?"

"Ah, Ted," the doctor replied cordially, as he took the young man's hand, "I shall spend this hour with you very profitably. But," scanning Ted's face, "what's wrong? You don't look well; and your hand is hot."

"That's a good start," said Ted, with a nervous laugh. "A little more of that and you'll have me in bed. I'm only feeling a bit low in my mind."

"You look bilious," the doctor continued. "You eat too much and are too sedentary. You'll be down with a disordered liver, if you're not careful."

"Well, you have the virtue of being consistent," Ted returned. "You attribute my mental state to a material cause. However, my liver is hitting on all cylinders this morning."

The doctor laughed good-naturedly and led the way to a table. The orders given, he turned again to his young guest. "Anyway, Ted," he said, "I am going to prescribe for you—gratis. You need a stimulant."

"Correct," Ted agreed heartily. "I'll take a Scotch highball."

"Scotch, if you prefer," said the doctor, "but the stimulant I mean is mental. Ted, you're going to seed for lack of ambition."

"Ambition!" The young man assumed an air of mock injury. "Why, man, I am saturated with it! It is a sole and single ambition . . . to do nothing."

"But that is fatal, Ted. Every one of us must have a work. Civilization . . ."

Ted burst out laughing. "Really, Doctor, your conversation

is banal! I am not at all interested in civilization, present or future."

"But think of the great things to be accomplished!"

"They were done ages ago," Ted retorted. "Plato, Socrates, Aristotle—what have we done since their day? All our ethical ideas, false or true, can be found in the ancient books. Think of the fellow who built the Great Pyramid. Why, he was the grandest astronomer, mathematician, and architect the world has ever known!"

"But we have progressed since then, Ted. We have learned much."

"Yes, we have learned, as Heine put it, that God is an arch-joker, and the joke is on man," said Ted, grimly. "No, Doc, the original work of the world was the most glorious, by all odds, and the hardest; and those intellects that worked without any knowledge of our modern tools were the most gigantic this earth has as yet produced."

"But see what we have developed, Ted. The . . ."

"Why, yes, Doc," Ted returned languidly, "we have developed new methods of sending our fellow men to hell. Our modern methods of slaughter, and our improved ways of causing misery and suffering and destruction leave little to be desired, I admit. But can you show me a single successful method of curing disease or any of the inherent defects in mortals? Can you show me how to make people happy, or humane? Do you know how to make a man love his brother? Can you prevent wars? You consider the human mind a wonderfully complex and efficient thing; but so is the centipede. Don't forget that the human mind prepared and launched this present very beneficial and civilizing war."

"But the war, viewed correctly, is really an opportunity," said the doctor quickly.

"I'm not courting the illusive goddess," Ted answered, suppressing a yawn.

"A great mistake," sighed the doctor. "You are young, wealthy, capable . . . You ought to be vitally interested in something."

"And so I am, Doctor: the ladies."

"H'm! Any particular one? I do not mean to be personal . . ."

"Formerly, no; at present, yes, decidedly. I greatly admire a certain young woman who has the keenness of vision to see the rottenness in us, and the boldness to tell us that it is there."

"Ah!"

"I see you know her. You've been under her scalpel, too, eh?"

"Marian is a wonderful girl, Ted. You cannot possibly admire her more than I do. But she is quite inexperienced, her views lack demonstration and are mostly impracticable—at least, at present. Her public opposition to the Wess bill is unwise . . ."

"Unwise?" Ted exclaimed, his former listlessness now thrown off. He leaned across the table. "Listen here, Doc," he said earnestly, "you and I have always been the best of friends, but we won't be if you force that Wess bill onto us. I know you are wrong about that bill because you are mixing medicine and politics, and the mixture is rank poison."

The doctor sat in silence for a few moments. Then he looked up at Ted and smiled. "I am sorry you take that view, Ted," he said gently. "I really believe the Wess bill has merit."

"But, Doc," Ted argued, "the thing is your confession of failure! The medical profession has failed utterly as a healing agency, and so it enters politics. But you can't make a person healthy by law! Let me tell you, you fellows are repeating history right over. The early Christians are reported to have possessed the power to heal. But by the fourth century they had lost it. What did they do then? Why, they turned their Church into a political machine, with the result that Christianity was strangled. Then what? Why, this hybrid religio-political organization got the world by the throat and nearly choked it to death! Now it appears about to give place to the medico-political tyrant. And the result? Slavery for the masses—call 'em asses—who meekly stand for it!"

"But, Ted," the doctor protested, "the poor man in the street . . ."

"Bah! the man in the street knows as well as you and I that your methods of treating disease do much damage and little good. He knows that here and there a fellow gets well, but disease finally gets us all. And he laughs at you—until *he* falls sick. Then he sends out a wild call for the doctor—just as Paddy whoops madly for the priest when he sees the shadows falling. It's a funny world, Doc, a funny world!"

"And yet, Ted, unless legally obliged to do so, Paddy will not take a bath nor keep his back yard free of garbage," the doctor countered.

"I am with you there, heartily," Ted answered. "But in such statements you merely beg the question, for your Wess bill is strung on a much larger frame than that of mere sanitation. Doc, it's the sort of legislation that gives you fellows absolute control over the bodies of mortals that I am opposed to. It's the bills that give you legal authority to enter our homes and enforce your systems of treatment upon us, at your

own prices, that I object to. And Marian Whittier is right, *absolutely!*"

The doctor again sat musing for a time. "Do you know, Ted," he said at length, "I must admire your stand. Our systems of religion and medicine do need purging. They must be placed on a more intelligent basis."

"Humph! they have been rightly called 'organized lunacy'!" Ted ejaculated. "Do you know what Whittier was preaching yesterday from a twentieth-century pulpit? An insult to intelligence!"

"Father Whittier became confused."

"Got mixed, I understand, listening to Marian. A dose of truth upset his liver. He tried to carry water on both shoulders, according to the report of the vestry. He's afraid of you medical fellows."

The doctor's brows went up slightly. "But we are digressing," he said. "We were discussing a stimulus for you."

Ted laughed again. "No use," he objected. "Unless . . ." He paused and looked sharply at the doctor. "Unless," he resumed, "you get nasty about Marian."

Again the doctor's brows lifted. "Why, Ted, explain!"

Ted again leaned across the table and spoke very deliberately. "Marian Whittier figures that this Wess bill is only a beginning. Lord knows what the end will be for us, but the next step she thinks will be a Cabinet Department—possibly with you as Secretary of Health—giving you doctors absolute control over a hundred million people. This medico-political menace is the only thing I know that could stimulate me—but to prevent this hellish thing I'd pledge my entire fortune!"

The doctor looked at him curiously. "You would actively oppose . . ." he began.

"I would fight you to the death!" Ted vehemently declared.

The doctor sat looking down at his plate for some moments. "You are right, Ted," he said, after a long pause. "And if it should threaten to assume the form and proportions that you fear, I would oppose it as vigorously as you. By the way, speaking of your fortune, who is handling your affairs, now that Van Ayle has died?"

Ted relaxed and again became listless. "Nobody," he said. "And they're getting tangled."

"The reason I mention it," the doctor continued, "is because Senator Chaddock told me to-day that he was financially cramped. Needs more business. He handles the Cragg affairs, you know, and mine. I thought perhaps you might entrust him with yours."

Ted suppressed another yawn. "No reason why I shouldn't,"

he said indifferently. "I've no stomach for it myself. Send him around to talk with me. Hello!" he exclaimed, glancing up, "here's Harris."

"Am I in on this?" cried young Chaddock, coming up and extending a hand to each.

"You certainly are!" the doctor responded cordially, as he drew out a chair and signaled to a waiter.

"How's business, Harris?" drawled Ted.

"Rotten!" exclaimed Harris, as he sat down. "Everybody abominably well!"

"Oh, you lack system," said Ted. "In the first place, you should boost your fees a hundred per cent. That's great advertising. Then, when you land a patient, hang to him till you get an operation out of him. Get yourself attached to rich families who have children, then employ the 'follow-up' system. Keep everlastingly at the mothers and suggest, suggest, suggest. Why, you can fasten yourself on a few Crestelridge families in time and live happy ever afterward. Try it."

Harris' brow clouded under Ted's badinage; but Doctor Roake laughed heartily. "Ted is a bit severe on us doctors," he explained to Harris. "And I don't altogether blame him. But I've told him we are going to reform."

"It's about time," Ted growled. "For four thousand years you've made us poor gullible mortals swallow everything known to the animal, mineral, and vegetable kingdoms; you've drenched us with electricity and the gaseous elements, you've carved us and sawed us and baked us in mud, and as yet you haven't discovered or compounded one absolutely unfailing remedy for a single disease! You can tell me that my liver is red, and charge me a thousand dollars for the information . . ."

"Not less than fifteen hundred to-day, Ted," laughed Doctor Roake. "We have raised the fee, because we are recognizing the fact that disease is of mental origin."

Ted's eyes widened. Harris Chaddock threw the doctor an inquiring look.

"And the treatment of disease will therefore gradually become less material and more mental," the doctor continued. "But that leads us into metaphysical paths, where the traveling is rough. I suggest, therefore, that we leave the subject there. By the way, Harris," turning to that young man, "please ask your father to call on Ted in regard to handling his financial affairs. You know, Van Ayle had charge of them."

CHAPTER 11

IMMEDIATELY after her interview with the rector Sunday afternoon, Marian Whittier had sought the seclusion of her own room, nor did she leave it until the maid summoned her the following morning. When she entered the breakfast room she found but a single cover laid. "Mrs. Whittier says, Miss Marian," the maid explained, "that you are to eat alone."

A flush spread over Marian's face. True, she had generally breakfasted only with the rector, for Mrs. Whittier was invariably late, and Ethel never rose until noon. But in this she saw a clearly intended indication of her further ostracism, an intensifying of that isolation into which she had been forced —why, she knew not—when but a babe. Tears sprang to her eyes. She checked them. "Thank you, Marie," she said, turning with a smile to the maid. Then she sat down to her lonely meal.

Her thought still rose and fell, like a great heaving magma striving to crystallize into definite form. "I love them, love them all," she murmured, while the tears surged up again; "and because I have tried to help them they have driven me away." But even as she voiced the words an accusing sense of her tremendous self-assumed responsibility rose up against her. She had struggled with it the whole night through.

Again she tried to analyze the suggestions of disaster that had poured in upon her so aggressively; again she sought a foundation for that sense of evil hanging over the Craggs, and from which she had felt impelled to save Alden. And, as always, her thought came back to Doctor Roake.

But why Doctor Roake? Was he not humanity's great friend, the soul of consideration, unimpeachable, impeccable? It was thus that the world regarded him. Was he not always gentle, courteous, ever calm in demeanor, soft of speech, suave, charming in manner, a type of the true citizen, beloved by everyone, and heartily supported in his vast humanitarian labors by all? Money and influence flowed to him without measure in aid of his utilitarian projects. His charities were innumerable; his benefactions boundless. He supported St. Jude's liberally, though himself not a communicant, and for reasons which he had satisfactorily explained to the rector. He was free of race prejudice or sectarian bias. He was a veritable knight, *sans peur et sans reproche*, who, despite Marian's arraignment of him whenever they met, treated her always with the utmost deference and tender consideration . . .

Though there was that which Marian had early sensed in his mentality—and which she could not formulate—that had aroused her, still her open opposition to his activities really dated from the launching of the popular Wess bill. In this apparently beneficent measure she believed she saw hidden the deepest iniquity. But might not the good doctor be sanctioning the bill through ignorance? And during various of his social and professional calls at the rectory she sought to discuss the measure with him under the stimulus of such a possibility. Discussion led to tilts and friendly clashes of opposing views. The doctor had shown that he hugely enjoyed these contests to which she challenged him; he had shown even more, namely, that he admired her greatly, and with a manifestation of regard that was subtly alluring, and that, surrendered to, would certainly lead to mental domination.

And so the girl had stood out against the man, despite the frowns of society and the rebukes of the rector. Failing to convince him, she wrote articles for the newspapers in her endeavors to defeat the Wess bill; but these were refused publication. She sought publicity before the aristocratic Crestelridge Woman's Club; but in vain. She laid the matter before such old and conservative physicians as Doctor Benson; but the latter feared to express an opinion. Then she fell back upon her own thought.

It was when she began to handle the situation impersonally that the light broke. It was then too that the doctor, while still ostensibly admiring the girl's ability and audacity more than ever, had first seemed to sense from that quarter a possible danger.

"Do you wish me to understand," he once asked her, "that you haven't the welfare of the community at heart?"

"Decidedly I have!" she replied; "else I would not oppose the granting of police power to you doctors."

"But can you not see that our aim is a beneficent holding of the people in line while they are being educated aright?"

"I can see," she gave back, "that the result will be a subversion of our government."

"Your view is unique," he said, concealing his surprise. "You interest me."

"Great wars have been fought," the girl went on, "to loose the fetters of ecclesiasticism masking in the name of Christianity; wars have been fought to break the chains of various kinds of autocracy and secure human liberty. But even while such a struggle is in progress to-day to overthrow the divine rights of kings, political doctors are seducing the people through their legislatures to bind themselves more tightly in an autoc-

racy that withers soul and body and buries men's minds deeper than ever in the mud. Our law-making bodies are now taking liberties that even the Kaiser would hesitate to assume. When the despotism of the State becomes daring enough to seize upon all children and mold them to its patterns of thought, liberty will die. With the child the mere creature of the State, it is but a step to a union of Church and State governed by *materia medica*, and from that to a one-man autocracy. Then the hands of progress will have been set back another thousand years. But," she concluded with a sigh, "the human mind seems determined to enslave itself under the animal magnetism of Franz Mesmer and Father Hell."

"But you would urge the people not to apply to the physicians when ill," he argued. "And yet if you wished a house built you would apply to an architect; if you needed a bridge you would entrust your needs to an engineer. Now the physician has spent years in acquiring his training to meet sickness. He has spent thousands of dollars to learn how to treat disease."

"But," she retorted, "the training of the architect and the engineer has been constructive: they study perfect models in order to produce perfection. The training of the physician is largely a training in error, in falsity. They study disease in order to produce its opposite, health—an utter impossibility! An eternity of such study and training would not enable them to heal disease, nor make the practice of medicine a real science. Were I to be trained forever in the belief that two and two make eight I never would be able to solve problems."

"May I ask, then, what condition you believe requisite for perfect health?"

"The one Jesus gave: 'Go and sin no more'," she answered. "Health, or wholeness, is a function of thought."

"I admit that human power is a function of thinking," he granted.

"Of *right* thinking," she amended.

"Of *thinking*," he persisted. "And the most powerful thought is largely that which you would call wrong thinking."

"And that wrong thinking results in disease," she declared. "Yet with material drugs you still treat the effects of a mental cause. No wonder the practice of medicine is chaos!"

In another discussion with the earnest girl—for he pursued her eagerly for her opposing views—the doctor had dwelt on the subject of mental control, and his attitude had aroused her to an appreciation of his great interest in the topic. "You understand," he said in elucidation, "that I, like yourself, deal more and more exclusively with thought-processes. Mesmer

discovered, or re-discovered, the fact that one mind can control another. He named his discovery 'animal magnetism.' Now for the benefit of humanity I have been endeavoring to formulate definite laws for it. . ."

"And you will fail," she interrupted; "for animal magnetism, which is but another name for error, cannot be formulated. There is no law by which we can make errors in mathematics or music or art. There is no law by which we can commit errors in life."

"I disagree with you," he countered. "By suggestion we produce quite definite results."

"But only when suggestion is made and accepted as truth. But for the fact that the erroneous suggestion always comes in the guise of good, or of truth, it could not be accepted, and would remain powerless. So with your Wess bill. It deceives the people by posing as something good. Known for what it really is, it would be instantly rejected."

The sense of uneasiness aroused within him by the girl's uncompromising attitude at length led the doctor to probe her thought along other lines. She had manifested an interest in Alden Cragg that to the doctor was unwarranted by the young man's character and by his treatment of her. "You strangely mingle what you are pleased to call the 'spiritual' with the human, do you not?" he asked her. "Your interest in Alden, for example."

Sudden confusion threatened to overwhelm her, and for the moment she could not reply. The doctor had unexpectedly touched something that she herself had not analyzed. Then her thought cleared, and she sat bolt upright. Alden Cragg *belonged* to this man! The doctor had stolen him—and, as she afterward realized, as certainly as Kudur-Lagamar had abducted Lot in that ancient Elamite attack upon the Word.

Again, when the doctor learned of her further efforts to arouse Alden to a sense of duty, he unwittingly laid bare his thought to the girl's penetrating vision. "You would sacrifice Alden," he said. "Of course, I attribute your conduct to none but the purest motive of patriotism; but the sacrifice is so needless. You would regret."

"You are saying that Germany will win?" she demanded.

His shoulders went up slightly. "In just what manner she will win," he returned, "I cannot say. Her armies will doubtless be defeated. Her government will probably be overthrown. I think the Hohenzollerns will be cast out. But, yes, *Germany* will win."

She sat regarding him for a moment. "You are telling me," she said at length, "that error will emerge triumphant, and that you wish it so, are you not?"

He did not reply, but continued to look at her steadily. The girl's thought became tumultuous. If Germany's ideals should win, it meant for the keeper of the Word . . . But why should this man wish to destroy the keeper of the Word?

She glanced up and met his eyes. They were fixed upon her like the suckers of an octopus. She shuddered slightly.

Then she sprang to her feet. "Doctor," she cried, "I believe you wish the British Empire dismembered!"

An exclamation of astonishment burst from him at this unanticipated accusation. His eyes at once left the girl. And he immediately turned the conversation into other channels.

It was then that the man and the girl seemed to enter upon that period of silent combat which each appeared to realize must terminate only in the destruction of one or the other. Save for Madam Galuth, of human support the girl knew she had none, while to the doctor's standard she well knew were rallied the Craggs, the Whittiers—nay, millions in souls and dollars, with material aids untold. Slowly the girl traced past events back to a common source. Doctor Roake had the freedom of the Cragg mansion, as he had of the Cragg mind. Doctor Roake preached from the pulpit of St. Jude's, as surely as he guided the thought-processes of the susceptible rector. It was the doctor who, through Senator Chaddock, had urged the Craggs to seek asylum in America when the war broke out; it was he who would now send Alden to the protecting shores of neutral Spain. It was the doctor who had introduced Otto Hoeffel into Crestelridge society, and secured for him entrée into the Cragg home. . .

But who was Otto Hoeffel? A young New Yorker, American born—so he averred—rich, aristocratic, who had appeared to amass a fortune in the brokerage business in a very few years. He had early been attracted to Marian; she had at once been repelled by him. He had pursued her determinedly, though she sought to avoid him. He declared his love for her. . . "But he doesn't really care for me," she insisted. "There is something else; but I don't know what it is."

Otto was persistent; he made known his suit to the rector, who at once gave it his support. "He is an unusual man," the latter urged. "A German-American of excellent family and unblemished record. You could not do better, Marian." But Marian stood firm. And then came Otto's final proposal, on the night of the great storm, when he had come to take her to the little informal at "Craggmont." "No, Otto," she had insisted. "I love you as I love all mankind, but I cannot marry you." And when he had demanded her reasons—for he would have her know that her rejection of his proposal reflected upon

his honored name—she told him plainly that she read dissimulation in his thought, insincerity, falsity. "You do not want *me*, Otto," she said. "You are not true."

And then his control broke and his anger flared forth hissing. He declared that he was offering her salvation. He accused her of favoring Alden Cragg, and implied that a sword was hanging over Alden's head that must shortly fall. Discretion fled before his hot anger, and he voiced such threats, such predictions of fulsome vengeance upon the Craggs, the Whittiers and herself, upon the American people, upon England, as to leave her gaping. Like a flash she saw things revealed that drove her in flight before their awful menace. Recovering from the confusion in which he had left her, she flew to Madam Galuth through the storm. How much of the Abraham story which she heard that night was told in the woman's words, how much was vision, she did not know. But under its stimulus she had snatched Alden Cragg's problem from his own feeble hands and solved it herself.

Again in her room after her lone breakfast that Monday morning, Marian dropped into a chair and buried her face in her hands. Yes, it had been Alden's problem, his only. Yes, she had fallen back, waiting for him to solve it himself. But he had not . . . he could not. And she had turned.

"Oh, I love them, love them all!" she cried aloud. "They don't know what is using them! They are lost . . . lost! . . . but they refuse to be saved!"

How often in the years gone had she sought to manifest her love for them; how often had she tried to tell them that love only would draw them all together and solve their problems—but Ethel had snickered; Mrs. Whittier had scowled as she bade Marian suppress her radical views; and the rector had sighed his resignation. Alone with her thoughts, the girl yearned toward those who rejected her, realizing that they themselves—though they knew it not—were yearning for surcease from the plagues of their false beliefs, yearning for that which is real, yearning toward Truth, though they would seek it only amid the flimsy and fleeting concepts of the mortal mind. They were stoning her, she knew. And yet not at her were their missiles aimed, but at the Word which she sought to reveal. Enraged at hearing from her lips that the man of dust is *not* the image and likeness of God, and that the pleasures of sense, no less than its woes, are unreal, they turned to rend her and cast her out. She knew that the rector had been bidden to regard her as but an ambitious phantast; but she saw, what he did not, that Babylon had put out his eyes and carried him away in chains. To her, his Christianity was

a travesty; his aristocratic church, vain of its prestige, a tragedy. In her sight he persecuted those who sought to know and demonstrate the primitive faith; his church in this world-crisis was a negligible force—nay, worse, a harmful negation. His rôle of master of ceremonies for the favor of the rich, she knew was burlesque; his church, exploiting society, she regarded as the foe of God. In his highly organized Christianity she found no message for the people; his church had no vision of social justice, no faith in the healing Christ. To the drastic need of the hour, the revealing of spiritual Israel, both he and his church were utterly blind; and their ears were stopped against the great voice now crying: "Cut it down; why cumbereth it the ground?"

Then she forced back her tears and sought to know the next step. "Still I must know that I *do* possess all power from God!" she cried. "I must act that knowledge, for if I do not act it, then I show the world that I do not believe. And then my belief will become externalized—as all belief does—and I shall be weak and perish with them!"

She saw now that she must *know* that God had not given her "the spirit of fear," but of "power, and of love, and of a sound mind"—all that Man is intended to reflect—powers that the ancient patriarchs and early Christians had freely demonstrated—powers that were lost through love of matter, and through fear, even such fear as had driven against her, till she fell back, then turned and snatched Alden's problem away from him—powers that the present generation do not seek to recover, though their conscious possession is a thing of life and death to themselves and their Christian system.

Late that afternoon, her struggle over, she rose and prepared to leave the house. "We cannot be leaders, nor can we keep the vision," she said aloud, "if we permit fear to drive us. I will go and see her; I will tell her. . ." As she donned her wraps her thought was on the white-haired woman who dwelt on the hill across from "Craggmont."

CHAPTER 12

WHEN Marian descended the stairs she met the rector, passing through the hall below. She stopped, with a wistful smile on her face. The rector did not return it, but paused and, with an accusing look in his eyes, said slowly: "Alden has been accepted."

She started, but did not reply. Thus had her conduct of

yesterday brought forth its first fruits. The rector turned and with bowed head walked away. Marian stood hesitant, watching his retreating figure. She would have gone to him, thrown her arms about him; but he passed into his study and closed the door. She choked back a sob and hurried out.

Doubtless the rector knew whither the girl was bound; but his efforts to convince her hitherto had been unavailing, and he would not renew them. "She is a dangerous person," he had warned her only recently. "She exercises a hypnotic power upon those who come within her sphere of influence."

"If you mean that Madam Galuth is kind to the poor and needy who flock to her door . . ." Marian had combated.

"I mean that she is an atheist," the rector hastened to amplify.

"She does not attend St. Jude's," was the reply.

"She does not attend any church," he returned irritably. "She practices demonology. She is corrupting you."

"She is teaching me to be like her."

"She is teaching you necromancy. She is an Egyptian—her dark skin is proof of that. She admits that she lived there. No doubt she was once a gypsy before she acquired enough money to abandon her roving habits. She has so filled your young mind with hypotheses, speculations, superstitions, heresies, that your individuality is becoming effaced, your very *soul* threatened with extinction!"

Yet the rector would have been forced in candor to admit that he really knew little regarding Madam Galuth, beyond such facts as were current in the community. He knew that she had known Marian in the girl's school days; had removed to Crestelridge shortly after the girl returned to the Whittier home six months before; and had since lived a life of strict retirement. No one had ever seen kith nor kin of hers in her home. She made no effort to form friendships; never sought admission to society; and seemed to shun all but Marian and those who sought her for her benefactions—and of these humble folk there were none that the Cragg-Whittier circle recognized. She appeared to possess abundant resources, lived comfortably, and kept a maid. And her banker had declared that her business judgment was excellent, her investments sound, and her credit unimpeachable. "If she is peculiar or eccentric," he adumbrated, "she doesn't show these traits in her business dealings with me—but of course I don't see her often."

In appearance the woman was a pleasing picture. Her age might have been sixty, although she had confided to Marian that, as the world reckons time, she would have to confess to nearly twenty years more. But there was little in her face,

and nothing in her carriage or movements, to indicate so very advanced an age. Her hair was snowy white, abundant, and decidedly wavy. "Dear me!" Marian would exclaim as she lovingly caressed it, "you never touch it, do you?" And the woman would reach up and take the girl's hand and answer: "Haven't I told you, dearie, that I touch it with my thought?" And Marian understood, though she knew that the world would not.

Madam Galuth rose as the door flew open for this late afternoon caller—Marian never knocked—and held out her arms to the girl. "It is good to see you, dearie," she greeted her.

"It is good to be here," the girl answered; "for this place is not a refuge of lies." Then, abruptly: "Alden has enlisted."

The woman's eyes lighted. A smile wreathed the corners of her expressive mouth. "I saw the notice in the newspaper," she said. "Have you come to tell me your part in it?"

The girl shot her a quick glance. "You knew he could not have done it alone?"

Then, as they sat close, hand in hand, the story came out. The woman listened sympathetically, and when the girl had concluded, she said: "And so, instead of knowingly trusting Principle to save Alden, you impulsively plunged into his affairs, seized his problem, forced a solution, right or wrong, and turned the current of his life without so much as consulting him. Am I right?"

Marian sat quiet and with bowed head. The woman bent tenderly over her. "You tried to force a demonstration," she said. "Why? That impulsive human will, calling itself yours, again overrode your calm judgment and made you send Alden, wholly without preparation, into the hell of war. Why? If he was unable to solve his problem here, is it likely that he will be able to solve it there? I think not, for there he will find conditions that he simply cannot meet."

"But . . . his danger seemed so real . . . and he didn't see it."

"Yet if God is to you what you profess Him to be, then He should have been much more real than Alden's danger," the woman reminded her. "What entered into this problem, Marian, that has not entered into others that you have solved in God's way? You have made demonstrations heretofore, you have solved problems, you have healed disease, and always in the Christ way. But here you departed from it and tried to force the demonstration in your own way. Why?"

The girl looked up. Her eyes brimmed with tears and her lips quivered. "I was driven . . . driven! It seemed that if I didn't seize his problem and solve it for him I would be

abandoning him. The aggressive suggestion kept repeating: 'There is no time to lose!' "

"But time is only a state of human consciousness, and you need not have come under its limitations."

"I . . . I seemed to yield momentarily to the mesmerism. It seemed as if a huge devilfish were absorbing Alden's individuality."

"Impossible," was the quick reply, "for his individual being is God's knowledge of him."

"Yes, I know . . . now," the girl murmured. Then, excitedly: "Oh, I know now that I snatched him away from one danger, only, perhaps, to plunge him into another, even greater!"

"But had the problem been Ted Sayor's, or Harris Chaddock's, or anybody else's, would you have seized it and solved it as you did? Then why Alden's? Marian, did something human enter this case?"

"Fear mesmerized me. . ."

"But, dearie, why should you have feared for Alden, when you would not have feared for Ted or Harris?"

The girl hung her head and remained silent. The woman regarded her tenderly for a few moments, then leaned toward her and laid a hand on hers. "Human love, dearie, is fear," she said softly. "You have never had to meet this before in any of your other problems. It entered this one very subtly, I know. You see something in Alden that no one else sees . . . I do not say that it is not there. I do not say that you should not love it. But . . ."

Marian started up. "He shall not lose his life because of what I did!" she cried. "I shall give him mine! I shall stand between him and death!"

"Wait, my impulsive little girl!" Madam Galuth laid a restraining hand on her arm. "As I have told you, the drive of error is not against Alden, but . . . *you!*"

"Is Doctor Roake . . . Oh, there seems to be something more, something deeper, that has not been uncovered yet! It has to do with the Word and Doctor Roake!"

"Let us not mention the human channels through which evil seems to be driving. There, dearie, think not that I am ignorant of error's wiles. I have watched for a long, long time that person here who has learned the power of liberated thought and who is perverting it now to practice diabolism. I have seen many fall under that cruel influence; but I could not rush in and snatch them away and force them into other situations for which they were just as unprepared. No; I could only work constantly to destroy my own sense of animal-

ity, so that I might follow in the path mapped out by the Master and thus be enabled to solve the problems of sorrow and sickness and death for these and for all our fellow men, and show them the better way. This is sanctifying myself for them. This is giving my life for them. 'Greater love hath no man than this'."

"But what can I do for Alden now?" cried the sorrowing girl.

"You can be obedient, and strive more earnestly to see in everybody what the Master would see: the perfect Man. You can cease giving power to fear, to evil. You can be obedient to the vision of the Christ. For *'by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.'* Remember, dearie, that it was Abraham's obedience to Principle, regardless of human personality, that won him the promise. Even while error was screaming about him he was bidden to look away from human beliefs of life and support in matter. And when he did look away from them he saw his God. Dear little girl," the woman put an arm about Marian's shoulders and drew her close, "how often have I told you that one of the most striking facts of history is that all nations have tried, at one time or another, to crush Israel. They are again trying to crush her to-day. Had Abraham not been obedient, the Word would not have been entrusted to him; unless you are obedient, the scientific knowledge of Principle that enables you to heal, to instruct, even to raise the dead, will be taken from you. You, like Abraham, have been bidden to go into Canaan to possess it, bidden to go in among the false testimony of the material senses that claim man to be mortal and God less than omnipotent, and destroy it. Abraham went in, into that strange country of life in Spirit which he did not at first know; and there he found the Christ. So will you. And there you will find the real Alden, forever safe.

"Oh, you are learning, as Abraham did, that the spiritual idea is not welcome in Canaan! Methinks the fires have but been kindled for you. Yet remember that it was in the very midst of the fires that Abraham and the great leaders saw the vision of the saving Christ. It was at Mons and Ypres that the Germans were turned. So you must now go forward, always forward, through the flames and the scorching heat—and you will find, if obedient, that they will not kindle upon you. You are Manasseh, dear child; Alden is Ephraim—both keepers of the Word, and both the targets of error because of it. But you cannot escape your divine calling. You have the letter of the Word, but now you must more increasingly demonstrate its Spirit. . ."

When the girl was again in the solitude of her room she bowed her head in deeper consecration to the First Commandment. She had been measured by the plummet, and had come short; yet Truth had caused the sin to betray itself, and she knew she was now free of it forever. She had passed under the great menacing "leaf," and would now tread the rest of the way through the dark Antechamber of Mizraim's "altar" with the vision undimmed before her. She would hear another call —she was confident of that—and, like her great Hebrew progenitor, she would obey. She knew she must stoop again, knew that the low, narrow passage must be painfully endured ere she might enter the King's Chamber beyond; she knew that in treading it her material sense of self must perish and find therein its tomb. But she knew that nor stone nor dust could hold her when the Christ should summon her forth.

CHAPTER 13

BEHIND the mask of eternal well-being which Crestelridge wore lurked deadly fear, the animal fear of the thief in the dark, who at the least alarm strikes wildly in every direction. Fear sat at the wheel of the highly polished Cragg limousine that drew up before the British recruiting station where Alden had given his trembling oath the preceding day; fear dogged the flagging steps of the youth and his mother as they alighted, assisted by the solicitous Senator Chaddock, and hurried into the building; fear, vague, unlimned, gnawed stealthily at the soul of the senator. The deep humiliation which the proud woman was suffering was hidden under her heavy veil. Alden appeared white and shaken. If their material gods failed now, whither should they turn?

As the British private closed the door behind them, a police wagon went dashing past. Within, grasping its hard cushions while the vehicle swayed violently to and fro, sat David Barach, torn with fear. An official of the Jewish Benevolent Association sat beside him. But Barach gave no heed to his companion, for his burning thought was fully occupied now with his gripping fears, now with Haeckel's brutal jest at the Christian God as a "gaseous vertebrate."

A "gaseous vertebrate" indeed! else had poor Barach not been so foully betrayed. Yet was he now thoroughly disillusioned—and humiliated, for his own rejected people it was who had rescued him from the clutches of a perverted justice. What had occurred in his home during his enforced absence he

knew not; he could only hope, as he struggled to batter back the host of sinister suggestions that drove every instant upon him. The official who had been sent to meet his appeal had telephoned a message of assurance to a neighbor to be delivered to his wife—Barach could not afford a telephone in his home—and then, Barach's innocence of criminal intent established, this official had accompanied him to further minister to his needs.

At the door of the little cottage they were met by Doctor Benson with uplifted hand. Behind the doctor Barach caught sight of the tear-stained face of the little girl whom he had left with his wife that morning. Through the partly opened door he saw the old rabbi, and a neighbor woman moving softly about. A cry escaped him; his heart fluttered; and his knees bent beneath him.

"She is sleeping," the doctor said in a low voice. "Come into the kitchen."

Barach's heart gave a great leap; a sob of relief burst from him. "Let me go to her!" he cried.

"Wait!" The doctor seized his arm and forced him through the room and into the tiny kitchen. "Here," he said quickly, "is some wine that I brought. Sit down. You see, you told her you would be back in an hour. She worried. Her condition rapidly grew worse. She became delirious. And when afternoon came, and you did not return, she was terrified. The little girl ran for the neighbors. When they arrived they found her on the floor. The . . . the baby had come . . . prematurely. It . . . did not live."

"God of our fathers!" cried Barach, struggling to his feet.

"They summoned me," the doctor hurried on, tears starting from his eyes, "but it was too late."

"But . . . you said she was . . . *sleeping!*"

"Yes, so she is. But . . . my poor fellow! she will not awake."

* * * * * *

What the Craggs had done to David Barach was done through fear. And fear is born of the belief that one's material gods are failing.

That night the brilliant illumination in the Cragg mansion typified the frenzied efforts of mother and son to drive back the sable fears engulfing them; but the light that flooded their great rooms was only a weak symbol—though they knew it not—of the spiritual light which the heavy material shutters of their worldly minds had barred out, and they turned from its scant relief to seek comfort in physical presence. Doctor Roake had first been summoned; then the rector. Senator Chaddock

came without invitation. Colonel Tenn, of His Majesty's Royal Fusiliers, and now in temporary charge of British recruiting in the east, was rung up twice, thrice, and held in long consultations. The colonel, who was a close friend of Doctor Roake, had again shown himself most considerate in permitting Alden to return to his home, there to await summons to the concentration camp; but the colonel had no authority—nor, if truth were known, desire—to oppose the solemn verdict of the examining physician, which was that Great Britain found her reluctant subject, Alden Cragg, physically fit.

Mrs. Cragg had collapsed, and was all but carried back to her limousine. And now, in her magnificent home, amid every material luxury, she paced the floor and moaned without ceasing. Alden sat for the most part speechless, in a sort of dumb amazement at the swiftness with which calamity had overwhelmed him—*him,* a Cragg! At times, when he recalled what he had so casually read or heard told of the horrors of the great war, a cold sweat would break out over his body. Then he would start from his chair, shaking, only to sink back again cowering before his terrifying vision.

Mrs. Whittier, in the privacy of her boudoir, sobbed in an excess of personal solicitude. "She didn't send for me! Oh, they will have nothing to do with us now! I shall not get into the 'Norman Dames'! Ethel will lose Alden! Papa will lose his church! Oh, that miserable, miserable girl! She has brought ruin upon us! My country! my country!"

But the rector, as he sat in the Cragg drawing-room dumbly witnessing the lugubrious show, found a ray of comfort in the probable effect that Alden's enlistment would have on the sunken Cragg prestige. For, though he had never dared hint it, he knew that the Cragg prestige had suffered woefully by their contemptuous attitude toward their country in this great crisis. Possibly the Cragg exodus to America was justified to their friends at first by the belief that the war must be of short duration. There was England's incomparable navy! France's man-power! And America's exhaustless supplies! But as Allied affairs went steadily from bad to worse, the rector realized that young Cragg was being subjected to increasing pressure—knew that the youth was pointed out in his various clubs as a fugitive—that he was openly approached by British recruiting officers—that he was at length shunned by all but a narrow circle of those whose views more nearly synchronized with his own. He knew that the Craggs had sought to neutralize this in a measure by giving grudgingly to the war fund. They contributed a bit—and quite ostentatiously—to the Red Cross. But then this was itself inhibited by Mrs. Cragg's fury over the

heavy taxes imposed by the British Government on her holdings throughout the Empire. Also, the cost of living steadily increased, "because," as she put it, "of the unreasonable prolongation of the war." And so acutely had Mrs. Cragg felt the financial situation that she had personally confided to the rector that she was buttressing her wealth by a reorganization of Primal Motors and by sundry other investments suggested by Senator Chaddock. "The British Government is simply taxing us to death!" she had exclaimed. "If Germany wins the war . . ." But there she discreetly paused. Later, to her son alone, she concluded the remark: "If Germany wins the war we shall be richer than ever, or paupers! We must provide for either contingency, Alden, by your marrying Ethel Whittier. Penberry's money is in American mines and oil, and is safe." Ah, could Mrs. Whittier have heard this, what a scurried drying of her tears!

Then, too, there was no little comfort for them all in Senator Chaddock's words, given with a great show of confidence after the sympathetic Doctor Roake had left. "Why," he said, "America will provide such an overwhelming surplus of manpower that they'd laugh at the idea of taking Alden!"

"But, I say . . ." began that suffering youth.

"Listen, everybody," Mrs. Cragg commanded, turning to her son, "Alden is speaking."

The senator hid a smile with his hand. But Alden sank back again without concluding his remark.

"Come, Alden," said the senator, rising and going to the lad, "stroll about with me. It will get your mind off yourself."

Then together Alden and the senator paced back and forth through the many rooms of the mansion, while the latter chatted continuously and in a light vein to distract the youth. But as the senator talked there was an eager glint in his eyes, and to a close observer it might have been apparent that his sympathy appeared a bit forced. His thought seemed to be not so much occupied with the young man's problems as with the aspect of wonderful "Craggmont" and its superb promise. He lingered thoughtfully at the great windows and studied the broad lawns, with their statues, their fountains, their splendid trees; his eyes followed the sloping terraces, the great gardens where curious formal shapes had been limned out of the natural rock. And as they roved about, he sighed, not unhappily. Then he resumed his pacing with Alden, ostensibly listening carefully to the youth's harangue against Fate, but really observing minutely, appraisingly, lovingly, the massive paneled rooms, the vaulted salons overlaid with gloss, the beamed ceilings, the tapestried walls. He stepped gingerly

upon the costly oriental rugs. At times he rubbed his fingers lightly over the rare porcelains, the heavily carved furniture. His frame seemed to expand in the glow that emanated from the rich stuffs and the brilliant tints; he hung at the great carved stone fireplace and gazed into the leaping blaze with eyes that snapped and glittered. In Alden's den, to which the young man insisted on taking him for a further confidential talk anent the avoidance of service, the senator beamed like an August sun. The intimacy of the beautiful room entranced him. The tooled leather and tapestried hangings were so soothing; the deep, heavily upholstered chairs and divans were so inviting, so suggestive of material ease, of measureless comfort, of happy indolence. A rich aroma of rare tobaccos hung in the warm air. A fire burned briskly in the smaller but more exquisitely carved marble fireplace. The senator sank into a chair and closed his eyes, while a smile of happy content sat upon his broad and shining face. Yes, Doctor Roake was right, Mrs. Cragg *was* carrying a tremendous load—and alone.

To Alden personally, as he sat with the senator long after the shadows had gathered thick, there was a certain alleviation of his fear in the astonishing enthusiasm manifested by Ethel Whittier, who had called him by 'phone to express her keen pleasure in his acceptance by the British Government, and who had terminated the conversation by exclaiming: "And, oh, Alden, you will look *so* wonderful in a uniform! Come and take me driving the minute you get it!"

After all, the youth at length reflected, his enlistment—though the manner in which it was forced upon him brought a blush to his cheeks—would forestall conscription, as the senator had pointed out; would raise him in the estimation of his associates; would even drape the hero's mantle about his now drooping shoulders. Perhaps a few weeks of military training might not be so bad for him. And . . .

But if only those fearful pictures of sodden, dead-filled trenches would cease to haunt him! What did it portend, that cracked bell? No, he was not going to war! . . . He *would* not go! . . . He was a Cragg! . . . The senator would yet procure him that appointment, and he would flee to Spain, even though in British khaki! . . .

He had quite forgotten the Barach affair. No doubt his terror would have increased to sheer madness could he have seen the crazed Barach that night lying prone across the body of his beloved wife, his earthly all, and heard him promising the poor dead thing over and over all night long a full measure of vengeance against those who had so foully done her to death, the Craggs.

CHAPTER 14

REGARDLESS of the perturbation in the souls of the Craggs and the Whittiers, the momentous fact that Alden was now a unit in the British army had to be faced. Then it was that Mrs. Cragg lifted her humiliated head and blessed that friend of suffering humanity, Doctor Roake. Under his skillful direction the enlistment was so announced as to convey no information as to the manner in which it had been procured, but, rather, so as to make a highly favorable impression upon Crestelridge society, and even raise the young man to the status of hero.

The news of the enlistment spread quickly; and, as must needs occur when one is so prominent as a Cragg of "Craggmont," the press took it up and made much of it. With the passing of the first shock, and the strengthening of her belief that Alden would not be uprooted from America's friendly shores, Mrs. Cragg awakened to the immense social advantage and enhancement of prestige to be gained from such gratuitous advertising, and she forthwith lent her aid to the eager reporters with an abandon that left them gaping. Alden's photograph appeared in all the papers, showing him first in evening dress and later in the British uniform. Long and carefully edited accounts of the Cragg ancestry were published, and brilliant encomiums on the gallantry of this young scion of the house, who had thus nobly offered himself in defense of his beleaguered country.

Yet there were some who smiled; and there were those whose comment was unkind. "The arrant coward!" muttered Ted Sayor. "How on earth did it happen? What surgeon cut the mental umbilical cord that bound him to his silly, doting, money-hardened mother and gave him a chance?" And when his gaze fell upon the newspaper portraits of Alden in his uniform he snorted: "The ass has been metamorphosed back into Lucius! But who provided the alchemy?"

"But I will say," Mrs. Cragg gave out at the meeting of the Domestic Missions Society, held at her home that Tuesday at three, and speaking confidentially to those constituting the inner circle of her set, "that Alden had delayed it, owing to the press of his affairs. Yes, it was while at dinner Sunday with the rector that he was reminded of it. And he acted at once. But of course he intended to offer himself anyway." And to Mrs. Whittier, who crept trembling to the Cragg mansion to apologize for the shortcomings of a daughter not her

own, she said magnanimously, but in hushed tones: "Don't ever refer to it again. Why, Alden had spoken to Senator Chaddock that very morning about enlisting voluntarily, and I begged him to wait a little."

"A Penberry would never do such a thing," Mrs. Whittier tearfully offered, her thought not so much concerned with Cragg affairs as with the possibility of her own acceptance into the ultra-exclusive "Norman Dames," membership in which she had long coveted.

"You need not remind me that she is not your daughter," Mrs. Cragg assured her. "I do not hold you at all accountable for her erratic conduct."

And to the Telluses, Blacks, and Kerls, assembled at the home of Mrs. Tellus on Wednesday, ostensibly to discuss Foreign Missions, but in reality for afternoon tea and explanations: "Alden was preparing to accept a portfolio in the British embassy in Spain," Mrs. Cragg elucidated, her proud head still held high; "but his attention was called to England's desperate need, and he became persuaded in his own thought that his services would be more valuable in the army. . ."

"Henry says," Mrs. Tellus put in, "that it was very clever of Alden to wait and get his affairs into shape and then suddenly put all his critics to rout by enlisting."

Mrs. Cragg thawed a bit under this and bestowed upon Mrs. Tellus an approving nod.

"I hope," said Mrs. Kerl, "that Alden will not go to war until the Wess bill is passed. We need his help. . ."

"But," Mrs. Cragg protested, "he is not going at all! He will be kept in this country. . ."

"Doing office work?" Mrs. Nence suggested.

"Why," said Mrs. Cragg, "there are plenty to do office work, Mrs. Nence, but few whose qualifications of physique and brain are such as to ensure immediate acceptance and advancement to leadership—and leaders are *so* needed now! Alden will be sent to an officers training camp and educated to become an instructor."

And thus it went. His enlistment was so unexpected, and yet, how clever of him to wait until the opprobrium of "slacker" was on the lips of his foes and then suddenly confound them thus! Why, it made him stand out like a veritable giant among the weaklings of Crestelridge! It put forever to silence the "conscientious objectors," the shame-faced neutrals, and the dewy-eyed pacifists, whose dirty fingers had pointed to him as a moral example.

The effect on Alden himself was variously beneficial. When assured that his real motive for enlisting would not be divulged,

and that there was small likelihood of being ordered abroad, the hunted look left his eyes, his shoulders went back, and his tall form seemed to take on inches. There was no denying that in his natty uniform he did look heroic. And it need not occasion surprise that Ethel Whittier immediately shunted her attentions from Harris Chaddock and fell worshiping at Alden's feet. "Doesn't he look wonderful in his uniform?" she repeatedly exclaimed to her well-satisfied mother. "Isn't he handsome? Why, everybody turns and stares at us when I'm driving with him! I'm simply mad about him, aren't you?" And Mrs. Whittier sighed happily as she thought of the rejuvenation of her gnarled family tree by the grafting upon it of the sturdy Cragg stock.

Mrs. Cragg was not slow to turn all this to profit, and on the very next leave which she should be able to squeeze from the far too lenient Colonel Tenn, she determined to end speculation regarding the Penberry heiress. And that she brought about very shortly, for, if truth were known, Colonel Tenn himself doubted the wisdom of permitting Alden to remain in camp longer than a day or two at a time. Immediately after his acceptance the youth had been taken, in charge of a sergeant and with other newly enlisted recruits, to the depot, where he drew his equipment and assumed the outward appearance of a warrior. But the hunted look in his eyes betrayed him, and the sobriquet of "Windy" then and there bestowed upon him was not to be shaken off. He arrived at training camp, after his medical examination—which had been in the highest degree perfunctory—in his big limousine and accompanied by his mother and Senator Chaddock. He entered the grounds with the disdainful air of a lord. His lips curled and his nose tilted as he surveyed his rough environment and what to him were the dregs and lees of social life with which he was now expected to associate. Fortunately, Colonel Tenn happened to be in camp at the time, and his presence doubtless saved Alden serious embarrassment at the hands of his future associates. On his first leave Alden had laid his head on his mother's shoulder and wept. Had it been possible, he would have deserted then and there. Knowing how from early childhood her son had always manifested a feminine shrinking from violence, and how she had often and anxiously said: "If I should be taken from you, Alden dear, what *would* you do?" the poor woman's distress now was poignant. She thenceforth kept the telephone busy, consulting Colonel Tenn and advising him regarding the sort of treatment to which her beloved son was accustomed, as well as the kind of environment proper for his comfort and happiness. But for the bigness of his

heart and his clear understanding of human nature—particularly his knowledge of the Craggs as derived from his close friend, Doctor Roake—the colonel would have set the youth to peeling potatoes! As it was, he sent him home as often as his conscience would permit.

On his next leave, derived on the pretext of getting his affairs into condition, Alden found Marian Whittier mounting the steps to "Craggmont" as his limousine drove up. She turned and waited when she saw his car approaching. When he alighted and stood, eyes staring and mouth half open, she came toward him with a smile.

"I am so glad you have come, Alden," she said, extending her hand. "I want to tell you that . . . that I acted . . . hastily."

He ignored the proffered hand, and drew himself up stiffly. "Oh," he answered loftily, "that is all past. Probably it has turned out for the best. I had intended getting into the service in some way."

She let her hand fall. "I know you are greatly offended," she said, with downcast eyes. "But I have come to make what amends I can. Alden," looking up eagerly into his expressionless face, "I will give you my life."

He fell back before this startling speech, with mouth agape. Was she throwing herself at him? Was this in line with her shameless public announcement that she loved him? The audacity of this girl, still to flout a frowning, antagonistic society, with naught of tradition, of wealth, of family prestige to uphold her! But for the Whittiers, she would be nothing: a penniless, friendless creature . . .

But then his shoulders drooped again, and that overweening sense of superiority which he was wont to feel in the presence of every one but this strange girl oozed away. Somehow, he always felt mean and little before her, yet strongly attracted by an influence subtle and progressive, despite his resistance. And he knew it was not due solely to her physical beauty, but to something finer, indescribably finer, that seemed to emanate from her whole being, that flashed from her deep eyes in a penetrating light that laid bare the hidden recesses of his own soul. And because of it he could not despise her as he knew he should.

Feeling himself yielding now, and angry because of it, he assumed a freezing hauteur. "We have been expecting, mother and I, that you would make some explanation of your . . . your strange talk, before all those people, about . . . *loving* me," he said.

She paused before replying. Then, again smiling up at him: "I love your promise, Alden," she said simply.

"Promise!" he exclaimed aghast. "I say, I hope you are not telling around that I've made you any bally *promise!* My word!"

She looked at him wonderingly. "You don't understand, Alden. I want to help you to know . . ."

"To know what?" he demanded roughly. "The silly stuff that you try to put over? The bally rot that that Galuth woman is teaching you, eh? Want me to get talked about the way you are? I say!"

She sighed, and her eyes grew moist. "Alden, I came to tell you that I am very sorry I was so hasty Sunday. I have come to make amends. I can help you. . ."

"No, you can't. And we'll not discuss that any more," he put in. "Just remember that you are to say nothing about it to anybody, and we'll let it go at that. I'll have to go in now; you're keeping me here in the cold. I'll tell mother you're sorry, and that will end it."

He turned and hurried up the marble steps, leaving her standing in the bleak wind. A moment more, and the big glass doors had closed behind him.

Marian stood for a moment, stunned. Then her eyes filled, and she buried her face in her hands. Humiliated, rejected, she turned and slowly moved away.

A few hours later, Alden and Ethel Whittier, just back from a spin in his wonderful new roadster, sat *tête-à-tête* over tea and wafers in the Cragg morning room, the girl eagerly expectant, the youth endeavoring to analyze his sentiment toward the heiress to the vast material wealth of old Simeon Penberry. His attraction to her—if it might be so named—was quite vicarious, indeed, a Whittier influence. Beyond her financial prospects, Alden himself must have acknowledged that she offered little. She was young, vivacious, and artificially pretty. But, too, she was a soulless worldling, who boasted to Harris Chaddock and Ted Sayor—though never to Alden Cragg—that she would squeeze out every drop of pleasure which this life held, and if there were a heaven, would ride through its gates on her father's flowing ecclesiastical robes. "If all that is necessary for salvation is a belief that Jesus died for us," she had often reflected—particularly when the remnant of her conscience rose in protest against some moral offense—"why, I'm safe." She had been safely baptized. And death-bed repentance was a providentially ordained institution that met her every spiritual requirement. She was a type of that loose, material thinking, so characteristic of these latter days, that finds its origin in a lack of demonstrable religion and its impartation to the young.

But Mrs. Whittier had long been imbued with the modern theory of self-determination for children. Moreover, her social ambitions left her little time or inclination for the training of her daughter. She had intended sending Ethel to a boarding school; but the young woman had stoutly refused to go. Upon the rector's insistence, Ethel developed "nerves" and a convenient "temperamentality." She vehemently insisted on the expression of her own individuality quite unhampered; and Mrs. Whittier fell back upon the convenient confession of incompetence: "Youth will be served!" and permitted the girl her way.

"But, Mama," the rector had often remonstrated, "you should give less time to society and more to your child. Is it necessary that you should go, go, go all the time? You owe something to the girl."

"Now, Papa," she would answer, "you keep your hands off. Ethel must not be hampered in the manifestation of her true self. I have come to the conclusion that the way to bring up children is to let them alone to grow up of themselves."

The result was Ethel.

As for Mrs. Whittier's ambitious suggestion of Alden as a life-companion, Ethel had at first hesitated, allured by "Craggmont" and the Cragg prestige, then had decided against it. Marriage to her must spell freedom; it must mean cut traces, white lights, cabarets, good times. Even now she had moments when she would barter her soul for a fling down Broadway! What, then, would it mean to be tied to the conventional, ritualistic Alden Cragg? Yet it afforded her a piquant satisfaction to know that Alden was seeking her, that he would eventually offer himself, despite the fact that she made no effort to conceal her decided preference for Harris Chaddock.

But Alden's sudden enlistment, his now soaring prestige, and especially his wonderful appearance in the British uniform! Perhaps Alden sensed the quick change in the girl's sentiment. At least, her now altered attitude, and his mother's insistence, rendered the present hour psychic.

"I say," he began, "you don't seem to get over your surprise at my turning soldier, you know."

She smiled up at him sweetly. "Well, I thought you were going to Spain. But I'm glad you enlisted instead."

He drew himself up proudly. "England's back is against the wall," he replied.

"Yes, that's what Marian said last Sunday."

His shoulders suddenly sagged at the reminder, and a limp feeling came over him. Then he braced himself again. "And you were so unfeeling as to say England might bleed to death," he chided, ignoring the innuendo.

"Oh, but I don't really feel that way," she answered naïvely.

He started to reach for her hand.

"You see," she continued, "I don't want anything to happen to old Simeon Penberry."

He drew his hand back and sat looking at her sheepishly. But time was fleeting, and his leave was short. How the thought of the rough life at the concentration camp tormented him! He would not be made to endure it long!

"If I should go away," he began again, "would I find you married to Harris Chaddock when I returned?"

"Oh," she laughed, "that depends on whether old Simeon should die in the meantime." She broke off a piece of wafer and tossed it at him. It struck him fairly on the nose, and she leaned back and laughed merrily.

"But," he demanded in exasperation, "do you *love* him?"

"No," she promptly returned; "I don't love anybody but myself—and you in that uniform."

"You only love my uniform, then?"

"N-n-o; I love the way you look in it," she explained.

He appeared to meditate for a moment. "Do you know," he said, starting up, "I've no doubt I'll be made an officer."

"Then I'll love you all the more," she chirped. "Oh, I hope you'll be a general! Generals' uniforms are wonderful!"

"Yes!" he heartily agreed. "And think of the jolly life they lead! Do you know, I think I'll be stationed here for a while, then given a billet of some sort. I may get into the diplomatic service. How would you like to live in, say, Paris, eh?"

"Oh, Alden! You are proposing!" She was not at all surprised, and she showed it; but she was immensely gratified—and a bit impatient.

"Eh? Yes," he blurted, "that's it!" He leaned across the table and boldly took her hand. "I say, we'll . . . we'll . . . will you? . . ."

"Will you give me 'Craggmont'?" she asked pertly. "And let me live *just* as I want to?"

"Oh, I won't take you away from Crestelridge. I'm going to settle right here for a while. Million things I'm interested in: Primal Motors, and . . . why, I've got more interests and more powerful friends here than in England. Look at Senator Chaddock, and Doctor Roake, and Tellus. . ."

"But I don't care anything about them," she pouted. "They're a silly lot. I want 'Craggmont.' And I don't want to be tied down. I'm too temperamental."

"You shall not be! And you shall have 'Craggmont'!" He got up and took his chair around beside hers. "And anything else you want: diamonds, pearls, autos . . ." He slipped an

arm about her shoulders. "I say, Ethel, I'm going to have millions in my own right some day, and they're all yours!"

It was her hour of material triumph. She smiled up at him. She gave a fleeting thought to Harris Chaddock, then laid her head upon Alden's shoulder and sighed. Mammon groveled at her feet, and she had bent and kissed him.

An hour passed—an interval singularly devoid of the ecstasy normal to the plighting of troth—and Ethel and Alden rose to bear the glad tidings to Mrs. Cragg. That practical lady, waiting fully prepared, duly kissed and welcomed her future daughter, and betokened the imparting of her favor by clasping a costly string of pearls about the girl's neck. Then, as she watched them drive away, she sighed and wiped her eyes. She was not satisfied, not at all! She had hoped, before the exigencies of the hour forced her to seek an alliance with the rector's daughter, that Alden would marry an English peeress. Alas! they had fallen upon prickly times.

"Alden," said Ethel, lifting her thought from the stunning new car that she would now claim as hers, "I used to think you cared for Marian, only you were ashamed to say so."

A tremor ran through his frame. "Marian?" he exclaimed. "Oh, really?" It was strange! That same suspicion had haunted him. . .

"But I never could understand why. She says such awful things. Papa and she are like soda and vinegar: when they get together they boil."

"But it isn't all Marian's fault," declared Alden defensively; "it's that Galuth. She's been teaching Marian hypnotism."

"That's what Papa says," Ethel returned, nodding her head. "He says the Galuth cures people with it."

"Yes, and she's got Marian doing the same thing, and got her name up! I say, it's a bally disgrace! We ought to drive her out of town!"

"She will have to go," said Ethel, her thought on Marian. "I'm just waiting for something to drop."

At the rectory door they were met by Mrs. Whittier, who needed no explanation further than Ethel's expressive look and nod to gather the pair to her bosom and shower forth her abundant but dubious blessing.

"We . . . ah . . . that is, Ethel and I . . . we have been talking things over, ye know," Alden very succinctly explained, as they made their way into the library, "and we've decided . . ."

"We're going to be married, Mama," Ethel calmly put in.

"My darlings both!" cried Mrs. Whittier, trembling with joy. "Always meant for each other! Ah, my splendid soldier son! Stoop down so I can kiss you!"

As she was in the act of imparting her maternal kiss the door opened from the rector's study and Marian entered. The girl stopped, and stood hesitant. Her eyes were red, and her face was drawn. Alden quickly straightened up, confused and blushing; Ethel seized his arm and faced Marian defiantly; Mrs. Whittier braced herself.

Then Alden remembered, and a flush of shame swept over him—shame that he never felt excepting in Marian's presence. "By Jove!" he exclaimed, "I shouldn't have left you outside . . . but I was in a deuce of a hurry . . . going driving with Ethel." He turned to Mrs. Whittier. "Marian came to apologize, ye know. Right decent of her, I say."

An audible sigh of relief came from Mrs. Whittier. If Marian had acknowledged her fault and had been forgiven by the Craggs, she must herself conform to the altered circumstances and relent, ostensibly at least. "Ethel and Alden have just announced their engagement," she said, though coldly.

"Yes," Alden put in, "we're open to congratulations, ye know."

Marian stood looking at him without reply. A strained silence followed. Ethel's lip began to curl. Mrs. Whittier's heart started beating violently.

"I say," blurted Alden, breaking the embarrassing pause, "aren't you going to congratulate us?"

"If you really love each other," Marian replied slowly, "then I congratulate you both. So few do nowadays."

The tense situation was relieved by the prolonged sounding of an automobile horn from without. Ethel dropped Alden's arm and ran to a window. "Oh, it's Harris Chaddock!" she cried eagerly. "Come to take me driving, I'll bet!" She darted to the door and flung it open.

"Game for a drive?" shouted young Chaddock, leaping from his car and approaching. "Supper at Burnette's Road House, and get you back by eight sharp! What say?"

"Of course I'm game!" cried Ethel, dancing up and down for joy.

"Ethel!" It was Alden's voice. She turned sharply and met the look of stern rebuke in his face. "You can't go . . . *now!*"

She gave a little gasp, and stood open-mouthed. Then she shrugged her shoulders and tossed her head defiantly. "Humph! Mr. Puritan! Beginning early, aren't you?"

"What's the idea?" asked Chaddock, looking inquiringly from one to another of the group.

Mrs. Whittier caught her breath and hurried into the breach. "Oh, we must tell Harris!" she exclaimed in hysterical haste.

"But he mustn't mention it until it's announced! Ethel and Alden are engaged!"

Harris fell back and gave a long whistle. A look of consternation came into his face, and for a moment he appeared greatly perturbed. Then he recovered himself. "Heartiest congratulations!" he cried. "That being the case, I'll take you both. Seat's wide enough for three."

"Thanks awfully," said Alden, with repellent coldness, "but I've just time to get back to camp. My leave's up. . ."

"Then pile in, both of you," Harris urged, "and I'll drop Alden at his camp and . . ."

"Lovely!" Ethel chimed in, clapping her hands over the revived prospect.

"No!" Alden insisted. "It wouldn't look right!"

A pause followed the remark, broken by Harris. "Seems to me, Cragg," he observed dourly, "that that remark reflects on me as well as on Ethel."

"Don't! Oh, please!" the now thoroughly frightened Mrs. Whittier begged. "Ethel must decline your invitation, Harris!"

"I don't decline it! I won't!" cried Ethel, stamping her foot. "What a silly mess you've all made of this! Of course I'll go, Harris!"

"Oh, well . . . not *this* time," said Harris, with a shrug of his shoulders; "since your mother doesn't approve. We'll try it again. . ."

"I say, Chaddock . . . !" Alden exclaimed, pushing forward.

"Well, say it, little soldier-boy," Harris returned, bracing himself before the angry Alden.

For a moment the two stood glaring at each other. Then Alden raised a trembling hand and wiped his brow, muttered something incoherent, and stepped back.

A sneer came into the other's face. "Humph!" he said in a low tone; "I thought so."

At that instant Marian pushed in between the two. "Let me go with you, Harris," she said eagerly. "I'd love to. Will you take me?"

Harris looked down into the wistful face. He grasped her hand. "You're a good sport, Marian!" he cried. "Come along! I'll give you the time of your life!"

CHAPTER 15

WHEN Marian Whittier emerged from the study that afternoon and came so abruptly upon Mrs. Whittier and the newly betrothed pair, she left the rector sitting before the unfinished draft of his Easter sermon deep in dubious reflection. And as he reflected, his apprehension grew. Despite the inoculation by the skillful Doctor Roake of his garbled sermon of the preceding Sunday; despite the happy outcome of the Barach incident—David Barach, the rector had been advised, had been discharged from the employ of Primal Motors—and despite the fact that Marian had just told him of her apology to the Craggs for her rash affront, the rector could not but regard the present interval of calm as ominous. On the table before him lay the morning paper, in which an insignificant item, the passing of David Barach's wife, seemed to stand out in letters of fire. This unimportant event would have been deemed unworthy of mention, but for the fact that in the discovery of the woman's body on the floor, while her husband was under arrest for trespassing upon the Cragg property, the city editor had seen sufficient sensationalism to render the incident "news." The same paper contained a glowing encomium of Alden Cragg's patriotism. Somehow, in the rector's thought, an ugly significance attached to the linking of these two names. And he shook his head as he pondered.

The effect of his confused sermon was by this time apparent. On the one hand, his young assistant, the Reverend George Earl, with whom he had spent a tense hour the preceding stormy Saturday night, had heartily congratulated him on his utterance with respect to the "Union for Christian Healing." "Too long have we wrestled with material observations alone," Earl had said. "It is time we looked into the spiritual. When we do that we shall discover that all causation is mental, and likewise all effect. Disease will be acknowledged mental; physicians will cease treating effects and will seek the causes of disease in human thought. Then the veil of matter will grow thinner, until it ultimately disappears, and we shall see ourselves spiritual and eternal."

But, on the other hand, a fiery young evangelist, who had been conducting a series of spectacular revival meetings in an adjacent town, indited a scathing denouncement of the rector's sermon. "I regard praying for the sick without calling a doctor as wicked as Satan's temptation of our Lord to make bread of the stones!" he declared. The rector showed the hot epistle to

his assistant. And Earl had replied, with a laugh: "Then we must conclude from this that to trust God alone for healing, except it be as a last resort, is criminal folly. But why, then, trust Him for aught? Let us lead Him to the door, thank Him kindly for past favors, and bow Him politely out!"

The rector's thought turned to his published statement of explanation as prepared by Doctor Roake. And his face flushed with shame. He reflected on his embarrassing session with the vestry following his unfortunate sermon. And he groaned aloud. They had bidden him, in no uncertain terms, continue to offer the "trichina and Senegambia as substitutes for God." Ah, well he knew who spoke through the vestry of St. Jude's! That financial board was but the mouthpiece of the Telluses, the Blacks, and the Kerls, who surrounded themselves with limiting Can'ts and Wón'ts, but paid St. Jude's bills. They had a right to demand the "Setebos doctrines of the professors." They had a right to warn him to continue to deal with the things of Cæsar, to stick to the familiar materializing of the spiritual dicta of the Christ, and to cease tampering with such dangerous doctrines as those advocated by his daughter Marian.

And were they not right? For had it not been confirmed to him that in broaching the question of healing by the Church he was tampering with fire? But Doctor Roake had relegated everything to the realm of mind—and yet it was the human mind, the same wicked human mind that was felicitating itself on its progress in civilization at the very moment that it burst out into warfare and rapine the most unprecedented and hideous that the world has ever witnessed! Still, the doctor had said that mind both caused and cured disease and discord . . . a fountain sending forth sweet water and bitter . . . a divided house. . .

Confusion, confusion, confusion! Was he becoming convinced that some day he would be compelled to choose between the undivided robe of the Christ and its present fragments? If he continued to serve those who persisted in regarding Christianity as purely ethical, its object merely the making of good men and women—and the term "good" subject to as many interpretations as there are human minds—then must he not continue to regard the healing ability and disposition of God as limited in the extreme, and subject to the sway of evil? And it would follow then that these limits to divine power must render God as unable to keep men from moral evil as from physical disease. . .

Confusion, confusion, confusion! And yet: "Your preaching," Marian had again said to him that afternoon, "shows that you believe thoroughly in another power than God. But

I can't afford to doubt that God is all. To do so would be suicide." Then he had retorted in his irritation: "If you doubt my preaching, pray tell me, what is truth?" And she had repeated simply: "That God is all." "I preach that," he declared. "But you do not *practice* it," she replied. And then she gave him to understand that, though she attended his services because he requested her to for appearance's sake, yet he offered her nothing with which to feed her famished affections. "But," the rector cried, "if God is really all, then matter is nothing. . . Impossible! Or matter is part of God. . . And that is pantheism!" And yet, Doctor Roake had explained matter as a thing of thought. But *whose* thought? For, admittedly, God's thoughts are not human, else were He mortal and essentially evil!

Though the storm precipitated by Marian's audacious conduct had passed, leaving him apparently unscathed, still the rector felt that his future security demanded that he destroy the girl's shocking beliefs, and he had felt impelled to interview her again that afternoon. But again she had almost disarmed him by her manifestation of love. What though she did reject the tenets of St. Jude's? he had reflected. Had not Madeline Nence done the same? "Oh, I just simply don't believe, that's all," Madeline had answered when he had urged her to unite with the church. Ted Sayor had practically said the same, and then had added the apposite quotation: "Mere incredulity, you know. And that is 'the surest sign of a weak head and a corrupt heart'." And yet the rector would not have called either Madeline or Ted corrupt. As for Carol Allen, she had declared frankly to the rector that she was not ready to give up the world. The demands of the Christ, as she read them in the Gospels, required much more than she could fulfill. He had urged a compromise: St. Jude's requirements were a reasonable recognition of the lure of the flesh-pots. No demands were really made that could not be met by all. And at length he conquered: Madeline and Carol became communicants, although Ted remained stubbornly recalcitrant. But could he not hope to conquer him, and, eventually, Marian?

But as his interview with Marian proceeded that afternoon the rector became increasingly dubious. Ted might yield; this girl, never! Nay, *his* was the danger of yielding. . .

But if he broke from his present mooring and launched out into unsounded depths, was he not in danger of shipwreck? He was not wealthy, and his salary, though large, was his principal support. Ethel's marriage with Alden must greatly relieve the financial strain and tend to secure the future, but that was not yet consummated. He did not then know of

their betrothal. . . Then there was his own prestige, his social position and that of his wife and Ethel. To jeopardize all this—Mrs. Whittier was about to be received into the "Norman Dames"—to risk it all for what might prove to be but a chimera was utterly unthinkable! No, he must remain as he was; he must continue to compromise, and to cover . . . to cover . . .

But, heavens above! that horrible bony thing was rattling out upon him again. . . It had seized him by the throat!

"You believe in God?"

"In gods many, yes!"

'But that which is hidden shall be revealed?"

"The gods forbid! . . . but I know that it will!"

"He that covereth his sins shall not prosper. . . Shall not prosper, do you hear? Then loose me and let me *GO!!!!!*"

The worn rector sat back and mopped the damp from his brow. That girl had not returned to Crestelridge to bring peace, but a sword! And she must go! Yes, she must go at once! . . .

But where? Oh, why had she refused Otto Hoeffel? Marriage with him would have solved *that* problem, at least! For Otto, though arrogant and swaggering, had the sole qualification needful for handling this headstrong girl: the Prussian estimate of woman's place.

But there was Harris Chaddock. To be sure, Harris had seemed to favor Ethel; and the rector, with admirable foresight, had prepared to accommodate himself to their possible union. Harris had been a bit wild, but the rector would steady him. He had invited the young man to become a communicant of St. Jude's; and Harris, seeking always to improve his social position and secure a clientele among the wealthiest citizens of Crestelridge, had decided to accept the invitation. Besides, Doctor Roake had given Harris his favor and had taken him into his office to start him properly upon his medical career. Now, with a pretense of settled religious convictions, and with the acquisition of that respectability which must come from union with such a church, Doctor Harris Chaddock had shown that he felt a smug satisfaction. And certainly it was an unusual start in life. Now his wits could be trusted to accomplish the rest. On the other hand, the Reverend Wilson Whittier was elated. He had saved young Chaddock's soul, and gained a very desirable church member and a possible son-in-law. Harris, to be sure, offered no such immediate advantages as Otto; but, being blessed with one such incomparable son as Alden, it were sin to be covetous of more.

Obviously, the rector concluded, his course was still a median one, as Doctor Roake had so wisely pointed out. For

the Church to arrogate unto itself the function of healing until fully prepared were greatest folly. Until such time, the physicians should, as the doctor had likewise indicated, collaborate with the clergy, and the transference of the healing function should be gradual and normal. Alden having been secured, as the rector was certain he had, the long anticipated hour had struck when he might pull from his side that sharp thorn, embodied in the personality of Marian, without danger of bleeding to death. She should be afforded an opportunity to marry Harris Chaddock; if she refused, then employment should be found for her in another environment than Crestelridge.

CHAPTER 16

CRESTELRIDGE! . . . paragon of elaborateness, formality, and pride, symbolized by superb "Craggmont" and magnificent St. Jude's. How lovingly the rector's thought was wont to dwell upon the unique suburb. . . That davenport which he had so admired in Mrs. Cragg's salon—the good woman had informed him that its cost was ridiculously low, a paltry $5,000. True, he later reasoned, that proved that the money-thought was a bit prominent in Crestelridge. . . But they were all human yet, and he must strive for tolerance.

But it was true that the rector did not approve all that entered into Crestelridge social life, as manifested in the elaborate functions in wonderful "Craggmont." Crestelridge was exclusive, but virulently so. And in the close neighborhood of the Telluses, the Blacks, the Craggs, and the Kerls he saw, reluctantly, traces of the artificial righteousness of the Pharisees. Marian had referred to them plainly as "trimmers." "They are the pillars of your church," she told him in scorn, "but they wink at evil, and they crucify Truth." And the assistant rector had hinted a similar arraignment.

"What," the rector had exclaimed, "*my* church the tool of malefactors, of schemers?"

"But," argued young Earl, "do they not appear to you to lack definite convictions regarding right and wrong?" And Marian had later told the rector frankly that they were wanting in moral fibre, that they were hypocrites and dissimulators, and that the young men were growing up to be hedgers and dodgers of responsibility, failing to play the real man, and that they were all selfish and cowardly. . .

"You are merely carping," he answered the girl. "The Craggs—Alden especially—what proof have you that you speak truth regarding him?"

It was as if the rector had asked a sign. And to the girl came the words of the Master: "The sign of the prophet Jonas." For Jonah had sought to avoid his duty in the handling of evil; he had dodged the responsibility. And because of it, error engulfed him—symbolized by the tannin, the sea monster. When he was willing to become obedient to the law of God, the error spewed him forth, would have none of him, but released him to fulfill his mission divine. This did the girl see in the future for Alden Cragg. . .

The rector had sat astonished before her as she voiced it. And while he sat thus, she spoke of the Flood—of the widespread degeneracy among the ancient peoples, in whom materialism had blotted out all spirituality, until the flood of error flowed over them and destroyed all but those who sought safety in the Ark of Truth, the true knowledge of the One God, Spirit. "It has again come upon the world," she added. "Europe is deluged with the flood of error to-day. Think not that you or Alden shall escape, except you turn from your material thinking and think spiritually with God."

No, the rector did not wholly approve Crestelridge society. The scantiness of dress—particularly Ethel's. But he had spoken of it. And . . . yes, there was a bit too much freedom of intercourse between the sexes; their conversation was much too frank at times. He had overheard things that embarrassed him! And the unchaperoned motor parties at night—he certainly had voiced his disapproval regarding these. And he had tried to frown upon the wriggling intimacies of their dancing, their barbaric trotting and limping and hobbling to the yawping of musical chaos. And he had particularly sought to discourage their gambling, their coarse manners, their tippling, and the indulgent attitude of the young girls toward the paraded vices of the other sex. He had preached against all this, in a manner. And he was certain to see improvement in time, he knew. "Ethel will outgrow her naughty ways, as her mother says," he comforted himself. "Besides," he admitted—and the admission gave him no small satisfaction—"I am a bit of an old fogy myself, and must not permit an antiquated prudery to act as a brake on the good times of my young people." As for the parents, absorbed in their commercial and social affairs, he must not worry them. It was his business to preach and scatter the seed of righteousness and . . . and . . . wait for the Lord to bestow the harvest.

Crestelridge! It had become the rector's world. A little world, a mad, mad world, within a larger one of which it was —in who shall say how great a measure?—a type. Never had the rector so deeply sensed the security of his world as on that

midsummer afternoon in 1914 when, into its unprecedented luxury of things and thoughts material, the war of the Christian nations was precipitated. Yet Crestelridge, because this very sense of security was so thoroughly buttressed by its redundant materiality, was slow to feel the effects of the tremendous thought-upheaval. And so very slow that by the time America plunged into the struggle it had recovered its wonted poise and could accept that momentous event without emotion. Where, in the world without, the human mind, under the powerful stimulus of war, was manifesting itself in a curious assortment of patriotic activities, self-sacrifices, and feverish efforts to turn a new leaf and start afresh on a better basis, Crestelridge merely smiled sagaciously and murmured: "Business as usual," then proceeded to draw in its greatly increased profits and vastly extend its already magnificent scale of material living. And this it did quite oblivious of the portentous fact that in the sodden trenches of Flanders scions of aristocracy, tradesmen, educators, and iron-fisted laborers were fighting side by side in a struggle that must eventually shatter the pernicious system of caste that gave this suburb its narcotizing sense of secure isolation.

But if its spiritual guide hid his head before the rushing whirlwind and refused to know that two thousand years of ecclesiastical organization had failed to produce a single Christian, so countless theologians in the larger world outside were doing, and to that extent he was their type. If its self-appointed conserver of health was prostituting the holy profession of healing to sordid politics in order to enhance his personal power, so, in the larger world without, countless political doctors were doing in their blinding mesmerism, and to that extent he was their type. If the immense fortune of the Craggs and the dire poverty of David Barach existed side by side, so, in the great world without, wealth and degrading destitution, uncontrolled luxury and beggary, ruthless waste and starvation, still battled for supremacy, and were tolerated, perhaps even approved, at least rendered possible, by the Christian nations. If the Chaddocks, the Telluses, and the Craggs, driven by fear, were slaying their fellows that they might prolong by a few years a human and utterly false sense of life, so, in the world without, millions were doing, sacrificing the saving principle of the brotherhood of man in their ignorance of the stupendous fact that man does not live by bread alone, but by thinking . . . thinking . . . thinking. . .

Such, then, was Crestelridge, after two years of unprecedented horror brought about by the very things for which she stood. Such was Crestelridge when, on that portentous sixth

of April, "seven times" from Nebuchadnezzar's dream-vision of the great image, the Congress of the United States of America solemnly declared that Manasseh should go to the aid of Ephraim in the great warfare with the modern descendants of the worshipers of Bel.

CHAPTER 17

UPON America's entrance into the great war the New World immediately exploded in patriotic sentiment, with curious manifestations of self-abnegation and repentance, and a temporary abrogation of the law of caste. Yet withal, it was not to become a whit less material or more spiritual for the experience. The effect upon Crestelridge was a slight wobbling of its aristocratic circles, for Uncle Sam was known to be no respecter of persons or family trees, and these "first families" had eligible sons. To Mrs. Cragg, it confirmed Alden's immunity. Her deep rejoicing that solemn day sprang not from motives of patriotism or love of her fellow men, but from pure egoism. "Think of it!" she cried to Alden, who had been given camp leave for the day—"on account of his complicated business affairs," his mother had again explained to Colonel Tenn —"you will have the glory without any of the danger! The Americans will do all the fighting now, and you will stay here! Ted Sayor and Harris Chaddock and Wallie Black will have to go, instead of you! Oh, what a blessed relief!" And she burst into tears of joy.

Then the practical mother dried her eyes and gave thought to a fitting symbolizing of the close of the Lenten season of her sorely-tried soul. This she at length decided should take the form of a social function. . .

"Let's see," she reflected, "next Sunday is Easter. Very well, we will ask the Whittiers to join with us in an announcement party for you and Ethel, to be given here Monday evening."

"But, mother," the startled Alden objected, "that's rushing things a bit! It . . . it's hardly conventional, ye know."

"Perfectly conventional," his mother firmly contradicted. "I shall telephone the order for invitations and favors now, a rush order, to be engraved and in the mail to-morrow night, with a bonus of a hundred dollars for doing it. We'll place everything in the hands of caterers, and give them *carte blanche*. Call Squires and help get things started. Have him get the rector on the 'phone. Oh, isn't it glorious!" And the austere, formal woman almost clapped her hands.

Moreover, this social function would consolidate Alden's restored prestige. Of course, it would be exclusive in the narrowest sense, and yet Mrs. Cragg's expanding heart had warmed to such an extent that she was considering inviting Colonel Tenn, in token of the favors which he had extended to them. But, alas! the colonel's texture was scarcely fine enough to gain recognition from the Crestelridge set—and yet, with America in the war, might there not occur the same leveling here that was taking place in England? And would it not be the part of wisdom to anticipate it thus? "What do you think, Alden?" she asked.

But Alden shook his head. "Colonel Tenn is like the Yankees; he's so bally uncouth he'd disgrace us in our drawing-room."

"But we might stretch a point, just to keep his good favor," she urged. "He stands high in England."

"We don't want his favor. My word! I hope you don't think there's any danger of my being sent to France *now!*"

"Not the slightest." She laughed lightly. "But it is sometimes policy to stoop a bit and curry favor with the masses. They are often useful. I had thought of giving a little party for your camp mates. . ."

"Now, I say, mother!" cried Alden, aghast. "Those rotters? Ask *them* into *my* house? My word! Why, it's all I can do to look at 'em in camp! I'm sure I don't mingle with 'em! That's why Colonel Tenn is so willing to give me leave; he knows I don't belong there! Invite that scum to 'Craggmont'? Why, I'd as soon ask that fellow Barach here!" And the youth carried the day.

But, though they might not at once and so drastically remove the limitations of caste as Mrs. Cragg had indicated, nevertheless in their joy over the saving turn of events they did decide magnanimously to forgive Marian's excess of zeal that had rushed Alden into the very position which, under the present circumstances, he would have chosen to occupy. "Call up Ted and Harris and Wallie," Mrs. Cragg suggested, "and tell them to bring Madeline and Louise and some of the other girls over here to-night. I'll telephone for an entertainer, and we'll have a caterer come in, and you young people can dance afterwards . . . And, when you get Ethel, bring Marian, too. Or tell Otto to bring her."

But Marian begged to decline the invitation. And Mrs. Cragg having learned from the indiscreet rector that Otto Hoeffel was nursing a grievance against Marian, granted the girl's plea on that ground and sighed her own relief over the avoidance of possible embarrassment.

To Madam Galuth, however, Marian voiced a reason quite different from the one which the rector had afforded Mrs. Cragg. "I can't live the sort of life they lead," she lamented. "I am not interested in the foolish things they talk about. . . They never speak of *real* things. Their lives are spent wandering among the shadows. Their conversation is all of money and society; their time is wasted in silly chatter and bantering, or in the discussion of discord and disease. It is 'My doctor says this,' or 'Mama's doctor won't let her do that'. . . The doctors are their sole guides, their absolute authority, their gods. They never mention the name of God, although they talk about His opposite, evil, by the hour. It seems that they can't think of anything but error."

"An indulgence that is costing them dear," said the woman. "But can't you show them, by example at least, a better way?"

The girl shook her head. "What if I should remind them that Paul tells us to think about the things that are true, and honest, and just, and pure, and only of good report? They would cast me out!"

"Yes, I know, people are ashamed to discuss spiritual matters," the woman answered with a sigh. "If you so far forget proprieties as to mention the name of God in your conversation, society will be properly shocked. And yet God is man's very life! Oh, the mesmerism of animal magnetism, that so blinds mankind to Truth!"

"God means nothing to these people," said Marian. "His name is not heard, except in blasphemy, so completely has mortal mind reversed everything real. Oh, isn't it strange that the *one* thing not taught in our schools is a knowledge of God, Whom to know aright is Life eternal and present health, happiness, success, and harmony?"

"And yet," said the woman, "you cannot abandon these people, dearie. Indeed, you must consecrate yourself the more completely to them."

"They are dead."

"Then you must raise them."

The girl clasped her hands before her. "Oh," she cried, "I long to! Oh, I must rouse myself out of the belief that they are dead, out of the belief that any must die! For then only shall death be overcome!"

"Go, child, and destroy the hypnotic belief that death is the master of life. Go, use the name of God freely, that the people may become accustomed to it. So did Jesus, the most successful man who ever trod the earth. His conversation was continually of God. But it was not mere chatter. It was the voicing of an intimate knowledge of God that could and did overmaster death."

To this isolated woman, whom the inert minds of Crestelridge regarded as an aged harridan, the girl was a prophecy whose fulfillment was imminent. "Crestelridge needs you," she said; "the poor, war-weary world needs you. The mills are grinding, and the people are being sifted, sifted. . . But you will remain, purified by the fire. You will not yield again to fear. And the splendid promise: 'The inhabitant shall no more say, I am sick' is awaiting fulfillment through you. Go. And, as you go, know that you are governed only by God, divine Consideration; and know that you cannot be made to yield obedience to any other power, for other power is there none. Go, knowing that obedience to Principle is the key to salvation, even as Abraham knew it. That it will solve every problem, even to raising the dead. Obedience is the child of Love, and Love neutralizes every fear. Go, for Alden needs you. Yes, he is dead. . . But you can raise him. And you will do it in the way that the Master pointed out at Lazarus' tomb. . ."

And the girl left the woman's presence more resolute than ever to master the "secret" of the Nazarene carpenter, to whom death was never but a phase of the "one lie" about Truth. Back into the stifling ecclesiastical atmosphere of the rectory she went with renewed consecration.

It was the opinion of the rector, born of Alden's wild talk immediately after his enlistment, that it was Madam Galuth who was responsible for Marian's aggressive conduct toward the youth. She it was whose influence had driven Alden into the army, acting through her free channel, the girl. And now, while the world was so vigorously cleaning house, it were well if Crestelridge should rid itself of this element so disturbing to its material ease. Something that Doctor Roake had said—a mere casual remark, no doubt—remained with the rector; and he now sought unto the physician for its amplification.

"Why," that gentleman explained, in his dreamy voice, "I possibly may have referred to the report that she had done healing—in her peculiar manner—without a license. While I wish to have suffering relieved, through whatever means, yet I believe we should conform to the law. The precedent is . . . injurious."

"She should be arrested!" the rector declared indignantly. "She should be driven from Crestelridge!"

"A bit harsh," the doctor reflected, examining his cigar thoughtfully.

"Not at all! Not at all! I shall see that her case is laid before the proper authorities!" the rector returned excitedly, knowing now that he would have the doctor's powerful support.

"Well," the doctor said, slowly, "the moral and spiritual welfare of the community is in your hands, and I must not interfere. I feel sorry for her . . . but of course . . ."

But then the rector's zeal met with a most unanticipated check, for he had scarce outlined the course to be pursued with respect to the woman when, entering the International Club to keep an appointment, he was accosted by Doctor Benson.

"Look here," cried the genial doctor, with a laugh, "that girl of yours is stealing my patients! If this keeps up I'll lose my practice!"

"My girl?" The rector's thought flew to Ethel. "Explain."

"I had a fever patient . . . Didn't Marian tell you? The rogue! Down in the Hebrew district . . . a little girl . . . I'd about given her up. Somehow, Marian discovered it. I was dismissed. And . . ."

"Heavens!" cried the rector, aghast; "did Marian interfere and cause the child's death? I've been expecting this very thing!"

"Humph!" The doctor shook his head, then broke into a chuckle. "She interfered, yes. And . . . cured the child."

And thereupon the rector's well-laid plan to persecute the Galuth woman from the town suffered fracas; for he could not denounce her without likewise denouncing Marian. . . And he had no taste for further disgrace!

But he hurried back to Doctor Roake and unbosomed himself. And thereupon the doctor laughed heartily at the rector's chagrin, and loudly praised Marian's skill and daring. "Better shift the indictment against the woman to the ground of insanity," suggested the doctor, still laughing. And the rector left his presence with the germ of another idea.

When he was gone, the doctor sat for some moments, deep in thought; sat thus until the door opened and Senator Chaddock entered, unannounced, as was his privilege. The senator came forward smiling.

"I didn't intend coming up here," he said, taking a chair; "in fact, I came rather against my inclinations. I'm always doing things of late that I don't intend to. I . . . Well, we're at war! . . . Do you suppose they've shelved the Wess bill?"

The doctor shook his head, while keeping his eyes steadily on the senator. "They will pass it, probably to-day," he said.

"How can you be so positive?"

"Have you done all you could?" the doctor asked.

"Egad!" the senator exclaimed; "everything!"

"I have done my work," the doctor said simply.

The senator sat staring at him. Then: "And you're sure

Harris will be appointed Health Executive? Egad! He'll make good use of the appointment! He'll break into the boudoir of every pretty girl in Crestelridge the very day his appointment is made! It'll be his duty, you know . . . and his privilege, eh? Ha! ha! But, I say, Roake," becoming again serious, "you've left me in the lurch . . . and after all I've done for you!"

"Why, my dear fellow! Explain," said the doctor sympathetically

"Well," the senator elucidated, "young Cragg is still here, strutting around like a game rooster, fêted and dined and fawned over! And he has taken Ethel Whittier right out from under Harris' nose! The cowardly slacker! Ashamed to become an American citizen! Bah! he makes me sick!"

The doctor seemed to meditate for some time before replying. Then he looked up at the senator. "I see that that fellow Barach lost his wife," he said with apparent irrelevance.

"Humph!" growled the senator. "Another Jew gone. The world's so much the better off."

"I suppose," the doctor continued, and closely watching the senator's face, "that Barach lays his wife's death to the Craggs."

The senator started. "To the . . . Craggs?" he repeated. "I . . . But why are you looking at me that way?"

The doctor's shoulders went up slightly. "I wonder," he said, "if Barach is planning to have it out with them."

"Why, the Jew is helpless! What could he do that he could get away with?"

The doctor laughed lightly. "Well," he suggested, "he might enlist in Cragg's regiment on the chance that Cragg will be sent to France . . ."

"Eh?"

". . . and if he is, then get him in 'No Man's Land'."

The senator took the cigar from his mouth and stared hard at the doctor. "Egad!" he exploded, "he *could* do that!"

That night David Barach lurked about the great fence at "Craggmont," as was now his wont, and watched Alden enter the big limousine to be driven back to camp, where he would be received in ominous silence, but with winks and nods and significant shrugs of broad shoulders. At the same time Senator Chaddock and his son Harris sat in close conference in the senator's hotel; and in their earnest talk they spoke often the name of the outcast Jew.

CHAPTER 18

TO the millionaires of Crestelridge the war had fallen as a gift of the gods, enhanced now by America's entrance. To Ted Sayor, than whom none could be more securely buttressed, it had been a decidedly entertaining spectacle while viewed from the lounging room of the International Club, a curiously interesting spectacle that justified his religious skepticism, confirmed his fatalistic views, and fed his cynicism with stimulating pap. But with a more intimate acquaintance now imminent, his face grew serious and his brow clouded. "Boots," he queried, "what are we going to do about it?"

"If it is all the same to you, sir, I shall enlist," that worthy lackey replied.

"But it's not all the same to me," Ted snapped.

"Then I shall have to enlist anyway, sir. Sorry, sir, but . . ."

"Go to thunder!" growled Ted, and thrust the valet out of his presence. Then, after much serious meditation, he bethought himself to pay a luncheon debt, and he recalled his valet. And while he was being carefully molded into the exact attire dictated by fashion, he studied his social calendar, commenting feelingly to his sympathetic servitor while doing so. "The war's going to put a stop to these parlor-anarchist seances, Boots," he said. "Then where are we going to learn that the world's dead wrong and that the I. W. W.'s and the Sinn Feiners and the social reformers are the only ones who can put it right?"

"Yes, sir; quite right, sir."

"If you ever have to earn your living, Boots, let me tell you what I've learned from these red-flagger guests in the homes of our wealthy dames. You want to do it quietly, never in the open. Keep on working at your job all the time, but just drop a bolt in the gears here, or a hammer in the cogs over there, or gently fix the boilers so's they'll explode accidently . . . You see, Boots, in this way you accomplish the maximum destruction without exposing yourself to discovery, and your pay goes right on. Besides, you don't lose your reputation for square dealing. Oh, I've learned some great stuff in these gatherings of the 'broad-minded.' But the old dames have switched over-night, since America went into the fuss. Old lady Bloomen, who financed the 'People's Forum' so's the 'Reds' could dilate on persecuted Germany, has just subscribed a hundred thousand to the Red Cross and the War

Fund. Can you beat it? And, look here," pointing to a date on his calendar, "that's in honor of Private Alden Cragg, of His Majesty's Fusiliers. His Majesty's Foozeleers, Boots," digging the valet with his elbow; "do you get that? There's nothing like recognizing the psychological moment for a patriotic roar."

Seated at the table with Doctor Roake in the club grill, to whom he was paying his luncheon debt, Ted felt his spirits revive. "Do you know, Doc," he said grinning across at the genial doctor, "if I didn't regard you as 'a mere dull physician' I'd ask you to prescribe for me."

The doctor studied him carefully before replying, "Well," he said at length, "a dunce sometimes hits upon a remedy. What are your symptoms?"

"Inability to get you out of my thoughts," said Ted bluntly. The doctor's brows went up slightly at this; but Ted hurried on. "My thought of you has been insistent of late, and always associated with money. I believe I'm going to hire you as a substitute for me in this war."

The doctor laughed. "So *that's* worrying you, is it? Are you of draft age?"

"Yes, unfortunately."

A pause followed. Then the doctor spoke. "Ted, as I have said before, you need a vital interest. You ought to join us in Primal Motors. It's a 'war-baby.' Stock jumped six points to-day on the rumor of a reorganization."

"Oh, I won't need Primal Motors if I'm going to war," said Ted dolefully.

"Nonsense! You are not going to war, Ted. You are physically unfit. You are tubercular. Your father had it. . ."

"Why, man! he died of pneumonia," Ted exclaimed in amazement.

The doctor shook his head. "It was his tubercular condition that rendered him susceptible to pneumonia. I knew of the case. And your mother . . ."

"I don't know what caused her death," said Ted. "I was a year old."

The doctor nodded. "She went the same way," he declared decidedly. "Tuberculosis. They used to call it consumption in those good old days. And, Ted," speaking seriously, "you can't take any chances."

Ted laughed sardonically. "Doc," he said, "I never took a chance in my life. But here's where I shall not be consulted. The Government . . ."

"But you will be rejected, Ted. I shall be appointed to the examining board."

Ted stared at the doctor with wide eyes. "Then my fate rests with *you?*" he said slowly.

"Why, Ted, I wouldn't accept a tubercular subject. But this is between us, you understand. Now, listen: you are coming in with us on Primal Motors. Let Chaddock handle it for you . . . There he is now," looking off toward the doorway through which Senator Chaddock and the Reverend Wilson Whittier were entering.

Ted rose and signalled to the newcomers, who, on Ted's insistence, joined him and the doctor at table. "Now," laughed Ted, when they were seated, "we have Politics, Medicine, and Religion at the same board. I think this country is going to see strange things from that combination in the next few years."

"Well, Ted," the doctor answered, "as I have told you, Medicine is open to suggestions for its improvement."

"Good," Ted returned promptly. "I suggest that the old Chinese system be adopted, whereby when a medic failed to deliver the goods his head was cut off and placed among the assets of the deceased."

The senator and the rector looked at Doctor Roake, wondering whether to laugh. But the doctor accepted Ted's raillery in good part and rejoined heartily: "Why, for that matter, Ted, we doctors lose our heads often enough as it is. And . . . But, speaking of Orientals, who are your friends over there?" indicating several Japanese gentlemen of distinguished appearance who came into the grill at that moment in company with various members high in club circles.

"They look like the Japs who attended St. Jude's last Sunday," said the senator, staring at them.

The rector winced; but Ted spoke up briskly: "They are. I've heard them talking. They're staying here at the Club. They are the commission sent over here by the Tokio Government to report on the influence of Christianity on the American people. Haven't you read their report in this morning's papers? It says that education, commerce, and industry have been developed in America in a remarkable degree, but that there is little evidence that the Christian religion is regarded by most of our people as important."

"They are hardly able to judge intelligently on such short acquaintance with our Christian system," said the doctor, shooting a quick glance at the red-faced rector.

"But," Ted argued, "they say they find that the very thing that, because of its pretensions, should have saved the world from this war, namely, the Church, is miserably helpless. I've heard them discuss the Bible here too, and they don't leave

much of it! Last night I heard one of them saying that he read in our sacred books—in Genesis, I think it was—about Manasseh, whose descendants were to be a great people; and of his younger brother, Ephraim, who was to be even greater than Manasseh, and whose seed was to be a multitude of nations, and he blandly asked if we believed these two would be represented at the Peace Conference when the war ends—if it ever does. . . But if there isn't Cragg! Oh, Aldy-boy!" he called, rising and signalling to Alden, who had just peered furtively through the half-open door. "Come and join us!"

The rector sighed his relief, Senator Chaddock threw a quizzical look at Doctor Roake; but the doctor smiled genially and nodded cordially toward Alden, who now swaggered across the room, head high and shoulders thrown back, and drew a chair up to the table.

"Gentlemen," said Ted, addressing the others, and waving a hand toward Alden, "we welcome the Army, to our circle. Religion, Politics, Medicine, War . . . Ah," shaking his head as he sat down again, "poor old world! Poor old world!"

"You fail to include yourself, Ted," said the doctor.

"Add Atheism, then . . . and let the suffering world give up the ghost," Ted murmured.

"I say," Alden protested, "I object . . . there are Christians and intelligent churchmen here. . ."

"Ah!" Ted sighed, "then there *is* a subtle distinction between the two!"

There was a general laugh at Alden's expense, although the rector's sounded mirthless. "But, tell me," Ted went on ruthlessly, "into which class does your friend Barach fall? I saw by the paper that you had him arrested."

Alden's face flushed. The senator noticed it, and his head nodded slightly toward Doctor Roake. "Barach," said Alden meanly, "is an anarchist. He has no religion."

"But he is intelligent," Ted insisted.

"That's right," the senator put in. "Where would Primal Motors be but for his invention? He is a stockholder, you know," turning to Ted. "Employed by the company."

"He has been let out," said Alden, and there was an exultant note in his voice. "Primal Motors is being reorganized."

"But he remains a stockholder. . ."

"He does not," declared Alden with some heat. "Mother and I have bought the company for its debts."

"Oi! oi! oi!" exclaimed Ted. "A scotched Jew! Remember what Frederick the Great said: 'Meddle not with those people called Jews, for no man ever touched them and prospered'."

Alden threw him a frightened glance. But Doctor Roake

appeared to be strangely interested. "The Jews," he said thoughtfully, "seem to be waking up. There is a marked stir among them."

"Have you ever looked into their history?" asked Ted. "I haven't myself, but I've heard Marian Whittier talk. . . Do you know anything about this Anglo-Israel idea, and the Jewish movement for a return to Palestine, and all that?"

"The war," said Doctor Roake, "has wrecked the Zionist Organization—or will do so. Jewry was trying to organize, but it has now been completely shattered."

"Humph! Not according to Marian. The British Government is going to . . ."

"To do nothing," the doctor finished quickly.

"All right," said Ted, shrugging his shoulders. "I refer you to Marian. She predicted this war . . . gave the exact date, 1914. Said America would get into it in 1917; and here we are. And so what she said about the British capturing Palestine goes with me. I'm mighty near inclined to believe all she says about Bible prophecy . . . Daniel and the whole clique."

"Daniel!" exclaimed the rector. "Er . . . what was her reference to Daniel, Ted?"

There was a long pause, during which Ted sat studying his plate while the others watched him expectantly. Then he looked up. "Gentlemen," he said, in a voice whose solemnity comported strangely with his customary levity, "we would know, if we were not swine, with our snouts in the mud."

At that moment Harris Chaddock entered the grill in search of his father. Alden saw him, and rose quickly, his face white. "I'll have to call my car now, Ted," he said in a jerky voice, and glancing nervously at the approaching Harris. "I . . . I'll see you all again on my next leave." He bowed stiffly and hurried away.

"Well, Harris?" said the senator, looking up at his son.

The young man greeted the others and dropped into a chair. "The Wess bill has passed," he announced, his gaze curiously following Alden's retreating figure.

"Egad!" the senator almost shouted.

"With the amendments?" the doctor asked eagerly.

"What amendments?" Ted sharply questioned.

"The provision that it shall not be controlled or limited by any other provision of the Constitution of this State except the referendum," the doctor answered. "How would you interpret that, Senator?" he queried.

"I'll tell you how *I* would interpret it," Ted put in heatedly: "it destroys every constitutional right of the individual, and clears away every constitutional restraint from the legislature

so that you fellows can put through any sort of health measure you wish. Once fastened upon the people, they can't remove it, for even the right of initiative is denied them."

"But the people, Ted," the doctor explained, "are always the court of last resort."

"They can't be aroused!" Ted declared. "Their perfect indifference is the greatest asset the politicians could have. . ."

"But there are certain constitutional rights. . ."

Ted turned to the senator. "Let me ask you, Senator," he demanded, "can the Constitution of the United States be so construed as, for example, to entitle school children to exemption from compulsory medical examination?"

The senator hesitated. Finally he replied: "In spite of the personal inviolability provision of the Constitution, I believe such examination could be made compulsory."

"And so do I!" Ted agreed vehemently. "And why? Simply because of the hold that *materia medica* has on the people! They would wreck their Constitution for it, as they do their constitutions!"

"But surely, Ted, in the interests of public health you must approve such a beneficent measure as compulsory medical examination, both in the home and the school," the rector urged.

"I do not!" Ted replied loudly, bringing his hand down heavily upon the table. "And to defeat it I'd stake every penny I possess! I'd stake my very life!"

Senator Chaddock looked apprehensively toward the doctor. The rector peered over his glasses at Ted and shook his head. Harris Chaddock's lip curled, and he glanced at Doctor Roake. The latter slowly pushed back his plate and drew out a cigar. Very carefully he ignited it, drew upon it until it was burning well, then took it from his mouth and sat back, examining it thoughtfully. "I am sorry," he said at length, and quite deliberately, "that I shall not be able to attend Alden's party to-morrow night. I shall be in Washington."

The others exchanged inquiring glances. Ted Savor flushed angrily at the slight. The rector exclaimed in protest: "Why, Doctor, we can't spare you! It is the young people's betrothal announcement!"

"I regret . . . deeply," said the doctor in a low, sympathetic voice. "But I am called to the Capital in regard to some troop movements. I understand," he added, as he again fell to studying his cigar, "that some of the undesirables, German sympathizers, are being rounded up. But," he concluded quickly, "I must go now to a clinic."

As the party dispersed Harris Chaddock took his father's arm. "Did he mean Otto Hoeffel?" he asked in an undertone.

"By gad! I've suspected him! He wanted to marry Marian before he'd have to leave, eh? The cur!"

"Eh? Oh, can't say, I'm sure. These are strange times. I'm all confused. But where do you come from now?"

The son glanced about before replying. "I ran down Barach," he said in a low voice, turning again to his father. "Told him I was associated with Doctor Roake, and was sorry I didn't know about his wife, as I'd have taken her case myself for a clinic. Asked him to give me the details . . ."

And, as Harris went on to inform his eagerly listening father, Barach did give him the details, though to do so tore open afresh his awful wounds. And, as the young man did not add, but as his father rightly guessed, that was exactly the preparation desired. To denounce the heartlessness of those who had done her to death was Harris' next course with the crazed Barach. The final one was the casual recital—suggestion, were better—of the manner in which an acquaintance had taken his revenge for an injury by no means so great. Then young Chaddock had sped away in his red car, a demon incarnadine, leaving Barach dizzy with the swift working of the drachme.

CHAPTER 19

MONDAY morning dawned clear and mild, and Crestelridge gentility yawned and stretched itself and began preparations for the elaborate Cragg function to be given that evening. Mrs. Kerl called Ted Sayor by 'phone before he was out of bed. "So sorry, Teddybear," she purred, "but Mr. Kerl got home last night, and of course I'll have to go to the party with him. But I'll save *every* dance for you, if you wish. And you do, don't you? Oh, I don't care what people say!". . .

It was an eleventh-hour decision with Mrs. Cragg, after a perfunctory consultation with Mrs. Whittier, to turn the announcement party into a sort of *fête champêtre* on the park-like lawn beneath the great trees. And so she directed her corps of servants to spread rich rugs over the still sleeping grass, to hang gaudy lanterns among the branches, and set out furniture in appropriate spots. Then she called in mechanics and plumbers and electricians to string wires, place lamps, and arrange to illuminate the fountains in patriotic red, white and blue. Flags of the Allies, with those of America and Great Britain predominating, were tastefully draped about; the great rooms of the mansion were artistically decorated; colored lighting effects were arranged for the ballroom; an orchestra was

engaged for within, and a full band for the yard; in addition, a prominent tenor was secured for the occasion, as well as a dramatic reader and a celebrated male quartette. New York florists and caterers were in charge of the arrangements and elaborate refreshments. The Reverend Wilson Whittier had promised to give a short post-Lenten address. Senator Chaddock would talk—and masterfully, as everyone knew—on matters patriotic. And the entire affair would be a gorgeous celebration, signalizing the union of England and America in the righteous cause of freedom—"Particularly Alden's," thought Ted Sayor, as he busily assisted Mrs. Cragg that afternoon and heard her announce this resonant motif.

But then, toward evening, it rained. And the hundred elaborately gowned and tailored guests had to be herded through the long canvas tunnel and into the house without so much as a peep at the bedraggled splendor of the soaking lawn.

"I just know I shall catch my death o' cold!" Mrs. Tellus lamented, as she clung to her disgruntled husband's arm and stumbled up the marble steps.

"Well," he snapped between his chattering teeth, "your favorite hymn is 'I would not live alway'. . ."

The enormously rich Mrs. Dodd, having carefully incinerated what remained of her long-suffering husband some years before, was escorted to the door by her footman, her maid following with a handbag of wisely assembled toilet articles and emergency preparations. "Oh, the dear Telluses!" she wheezed, lumbering up to this prickly couple. "My, ain't this a shame! And I got up from nervous prostration just to come here and see the sights! Here, William, take Bubbles," turning to the footman and delivering a tiny Pomeranian pup into his arms. "And don't forget to warm her milk before you put her to bed. I just *had* to bring her as far as I could," she explained to the Telluses; "the poor little darling worries so when I'm away."

On through the great glass doors the guests were flowing in a gilded stream. There were the Blacks, the Kerls, the Chaddocks, all the cream of Crestelridge fair gentility. And there were certain lesser lights, the rector's young assistant, George Earl, for example, and Marian Whittier, who would not be in the receiving line with her more fortunate sister. And Harris Chaddock was there, though Alden now thoroughly hated him, but felt obliged to invite him on the senator's account. "We must be politic, Alden," his mother had advised. "The senator is now handling our financial affairs, you know."

On they flowed, and into the charge of maids and valets, to be passed by them to the flower-banked grand salon for

presentation to the bejeweled and bedizened Mrs. Cragg and her stalwart uniformed son, and the bedecked and resplendent Mrs. Whittier and radiant Ethel, who waited, stiffly proud and formal, to receive them. "There are no prophets among these great ones," sighed George Earl. "There are none of leadership or vision. Reactionaries they are; worshipers of the great god of Glad Well-being; unappreciative of the world-cataclysm; defiant of change; fanatic supporters of orthodoxy; pacifists, doggedly determined to deprive Armageddon of every vestige of moral value, yet knowing not that their own world is dead and that they are facing a new one with which they will have little in common. . ."

"A half-million in contracts already signed up, Chaddock." Mr. Tellus, having disposed of his wife, was expanding freely. "Your tip about America going into the war was our making."

"It's going to be the biggest baby of the bunch," said Kerl, giving his tie a jerk and adjusting his three-carat stud. "Hello, Black. Where's Roake?"

"Dunno. I say, Chaddock, how's Roake's suit against Bifford coming out?"

"What's that?" asked Kerl, craning his long neck. "Something juicy about Bifford's wife? Let's have it."

"Why, no," the senator explained. "Roake sent Bifford a bill for twenty-five thousand for treating his wife, and Bifford wouldn't pay. So Roake sued him."

"Right," declared Kerl. "Bifford's a tight-wad. Um-m-m. Did the lady get well?"

"No, she died," said the senator. "But they've settled out of court for fifteen thousand."

Ted Sayor had sighed with relief over Mrs. Kerl's telephoned message of the morning. Then he had called the rectory to ask Marian if she was expected to be in the receiving line; and, following her negative answer, had asked if he might escort her to the function. "And I want you to give me every dance," he said, with his thought on Mrs. Kerl, "for I've got a lot to say to you."

The brilliant assemblage floated languidly, rapturously, through the fairyland of wonderful "Craggmont," through the gorgeously decorated salons and parlors and halls, with their silks swishing and crackling like crisp new bank notes and their jewels scintillating opulently in the dazzling light. Mrs. Kerl drifted up to Mrs. Tellus with the gushing announcement of the evening's program as just received from the well-nigh transported Mrs. Whittier. "Who do you suppose is here?" she exclaimed eagerly. "Flumenschein, the new poet! He's going to read some of his own poems! Think of it! Oh, I do

hope he'll read that one about the severed toad! How does it go? We discussed it at the Culture Club last week, don't you remember? Let's see:

'Warts, visage repellent, o'er field-wort,
stems of crops, invaders of mullen,
through darkness the destroyers seeking,
destroyed with iron, severed, God's image,
by image, great lord, boasted hero. . .'

You remember, don't you? It simply *thrilled* me! . . . ."

A blare of brass announced the opening of the ball. Alden Cragg, mesmerized by the romance of his unique position, stimulated beyond his powers of assimilation by the acclaim showered upon him since his enlistment, lauded as a hero, admired for his splendid appearance as a soldier, eulogized for his patriotism, with his head now whirling and his heart leaping, bent and offered his arm to resplendent Ethel Whittier, and the twain stepped out upon the waxed floor of the great ballroom.

Ted Sayor, with Marian Whittier on his arm, fell into the line of march. "I was intending to come alone," he said to the girl; "for I thought, if you weren't going to be in the receiving line, Harris Chaddock might bring you. Was mighty glad when I heard he wasn't, for I don't want him to get to paying attention to you." He laughed lightly. Then: "George Eliot says somewhere that every man who isn't a monster or a mathematician or a mad philosopher is the slave of some woman. And I might as well say now as later that if I were not in the first and third categories I'd be yours."

The girl looked up at him and smiled. "If you were my slave," she said gently, "I'd set you free."

"I know that remark has a double *entendu*," he countered. "Oh, I'm a slave, all right! But, do you know? I'm trying to reform. Went to church Sunday to hear your father's sermon. To be sure, I don't think the Lord understood it any better than I, but . . . And, say, I'm getting myself in great condition physically. . ."

"Are you going to war?" she asked.

"Can't. Sorry. I'm tubercular, Roake says. He's on the board. But I'm taking treatment . . . Do you know? I've got a new theory. It's about the bones of the spine pinching the spinal cord and causing all our miseries. I had Boots go all over my spine to-night and adjust the bones before starting over here, so's to avoid trouble. You know, that will eventually become just as necessary as dressing." He laughed again; but to the girl it sounded hollow.

"It will become necessary if the human mind takes it up," she agreed, studying him closely.

"Well, I guess that's so. Oh, and I've got another. It's about having all your teeth extracted so's to prevent insanity."

"Are you worried?" she asked naïvely.

He laughed. "Not a bit. I've no mind to lose. But, say, to change the subject, Cragg and Ethel make a nifty-looking couple, don't they? Gad! he's a handsome fellow! . . . Ah, there's the dance jazz. Now I'll teach you the new limp I just learned from my dancing master. It's a bit naughty, but adorable. Ethel will love it." And they whirled away across the floor.

"Jazz, you know," Ted explained, as they jostled about through the crowd, "is a fitting expression of the present Kultur era, eh? But Mrs. Kerl insists that it's really scientific music. Can you beat it?"

"The science that she means is the sort that is now destroying our civilization," Marian replied.

"She's . . . making a . . . a science . . . of *love*," Ted panted. Then, abruptly, as the dance ended: "Where shall we go?"

"Anywhere," said Marian, with a wistful little laugh, "where we don't have to listen to vapid, frivolous society gabble or disease talk or discourses on money-making."

"H'm!" Ted gave back, "communication with the North Pole hasn't been established yet."

"Oh, I'd be willing to take a far longer and harder journey to get away from it all," she declared.

"But you can't, you know. Don't you intend to take any part in life?"

"Why, yes, Ted, a *thinking* part."

He laughed again, but with an effort she thought. Then he became serious. "I say, Marian . . . I want to talk some things over with you. . . I've been feeling horribly depressed of late. Will you talk to me . . . here . . . to-night?"

"Of course, Ted, gladly. And now, if you insist on my taking an active part in this show that you call life, take me over there across the room."

Ted complied and led her to where Harris Chaddock, Wallie Black, Madeline Nence, and others of their particular set were beginning to make the room ring with their laughter and loud talk. "Here's the girl who predicted the war," Ted announced, pushing Marian forward. "What shall we . . ."

"Here, Marian," the grinning Freddy Kerl interrupted, "read my palm and see if I'm going to be drafted."

"I say, Marian, how long is the war going to last, and which

side will win?" demanded Wallie Black. "I've got some bets up. If you hit it off right I'll split fifty-fifty with you."

"I'd rather you'd tell us what's become of Otto Hoeffel," Harris Chaddock put in. "Do you remember that we saw him on a corner staring at us when we went driving the day Alden and Ethel became engaged? Since then he's dropped out of sight completely."

"Oh, Harris isn't asking about himself; *he* isn't afraid of being drafted," Freddy cynically commented, "his father's got *influence.*"

"Well, yours has got money."

"Ted, I'll bet an even thousand you'll go," declared Wallie.

"I'll take that," Ted returned promptly.

"I say," Freddy put in, "let's get Alden over here and then start talking about the atrocities, just to see him turn white and make his getaway. Why, down at the club every time anybody mentions the killing in Europe Cragg runs out of the room. . ."

To Marian Whittier, who long since had set her face firmly against the materialism regnant in the shriveled souls of Crestelridge, the muggy, heavily scented air in the Cragg mansion that night was stifling. But she had come wrapped in the thought of consecration to these people, with the sense of her duty to Alden deeply impressed upon her. And so to the vapid remarks of her associates she strove to return answers that were not pedantic, not prudish or critical. She entered into their fun; she read their palms with an abandon that delighted them; she prophesied ridiculous happenings that set them roaring with laughter. Then she suddenly negatived it all by telling them that their future lay within themselves and was entirely a function of the externalization of their thinking.

"I wish we could get Alden over here," urged Freddy Kerl. "I want Marian to read his palm. But he's so deucedly in love with Ethel he won't leave her for a minute." At which remark Harris Chaddock's eyes narrowed and gleamed.

A little flurry across the salon announced the arrival of the rector, who, detained by an urgent matter of church polity, had —to his very great annoyance—been prevented from standing in the receiving line. "Ah, you worldly revelers!" they heard him exclaim jovially, as he shook a finger at the merry throng; "if Lent had lasted another day you would have . . ."

"We'd have burst!" a pink-faced doll finished, amid a general laugh.

In the gilded music room below, the tenor was rendering a passionate solo from an Italian opera. In the great library the orchestra played softly, seductively, strains that caused the eyes

of the young swains to turn amorously upon the scantily gowned, fluffy creatures snuggled at their sides. Serving-men sped swiftly, noiselessly, hither and yon. Glasses clinked; happy laughter rose everywhere; glad content warmed every bosom. It was still a good, good world. . .

"What I wanted to say, Chaddock," Black was saying, glancing furtively around, then drawing the senator still further into the corner, "was that I don't want my boy drawn. Get me? I suppose Kerl has said the same thing to you. But I don't care a damn. Name your figure, but keep my boy out of the army. Understand?"

The hours sped through "Craggmont's" halls in gladsome revelry. Without, the drizzling rain lay upon the soaked earth in muddy pools, and rose again in thick clouds of reeking mist. To Marian's thought there was something portentous in the sharp contrast. Try as she might, she could not shake off the prescience of that something pending, something fell, imminent, that was descending like a swart cloud, and that, when lifted, would reveal the now gay mansion black and desolate, with its careless inmates driven afar. "Oh, Ted," she cried, when, after the next dance, that young worldling came to her for the talk she had promised him, "I wish I could tell you what I see, what I have seen. . ."

"It is just that for which I have come," he said, and in a tone so earnest that the girl looked at him in surprise. "Come out to the conservatory with me. I've got a corner all arranged for us. Look at that!" nodding toward the opposite side of the room; "Ethel is flirting like mad with Harris Chaddock right under Alden's eyes. Alden will have to keep busy with the dear girl. She won't purr unless he keeps everlastingly stroking her the right way. . . Oh, I beg your pardon! I forgot she's your sister, really. And, yet, she isn't, is she? She's a rare fruit, dangling from the topmost branch of the famous Penberry tree, while you . . . H'm! . . ."

She laughed. "I am a modest weed, grateful for the shade of her family tree."

A few moments afterward they were ensconced in the secluded retreat which Ted had discovered. "I want to speak to you, Marian," he began, "about . . . well, Doctor Roake, to be candid. I've had several bouts with him of late, and I want to know what you . . . well, how you size him up. I know you have been opposing him . . . because he is a doctor. . ."

She interrupted him by laying a hand upon his arm. "Understand me, Ted," she said: "with conscientious physicians, with those who are honest, like old Doctor Benson, for example, who are glad to progress, and who do not exploit

their patients, I am not at war. The honest doctor was never so needed as in the present state of world-thought."

"Well, then you are against the political doctor. And you consider Roake in that class. And . . . Say, Marian, is there anything odd about him?"

The girl looked away. Ted waited for a moment, then went on. "He seems to influence . . . people in some way," he said hesitatingly. "And yet I can't point to a single thing that he has really done. . . But I . . . I don't . . . know. . ."

She turned quickly. "Ted," she exclaimed, "have you too become enmeshed?"

His eyes and mouth gaped in astonishment. "Enmeshed!" he muttered. Then, recovering: "No, I'm still running my own affairs, if that's what you mean. But I do confess I need help. And I thought perhaps you could . . ."

"I can, Ted," she cried eagerly. "But it must be in my way."

He gave a gesture of impatience. "Oh, yes," he returned peevishly, "I suppose it must be with your odd notions that have set you at variance with the 'regulars' here. But I don't want Bible verses quoted to me. Just start with the premise that I'm an atheist. . ."

"But that is a false premise," she interrupted; "no man is ever really an atheist. Deep within everybody there is an instinctive acknowledgment of a higher power."

"But I don't believe in anything," he stoutly asserted.

"Oh, yes, you do," she returned; "you believe thoroughly in the power of evil. Shall I prove it to you?"

"I defy you to! But, mind you, I'm not going to talk religion. You'll get to discoursing on God, the unknown quantity that the theological mathematicians have been solving for since time began, and we'll land nowhere. I don't care to hear again that all things are mental, manufactured by a Creator who is Mind. . . I say, He must be a troubled mind to have permitted this horrible war, eh?"

"But what if He did not permit it, Ted?" she asked, watching him closely.

"Then," he came back quickly, "some power did permit it that is greater than your God. And I've got you there!"

"And you have thereby proved that you *do* believe thoroughly in the power of evil." She laughed at his wry face; then: "Ted, dear, you are mentally twisted. The war shows what happens when the people deny God, as you are doing."

"Well," he countered, "let us say then that I deny Christianity. All that Bible stuff—why, historically, it's sheer nonsense! Zoroaster, you know, was supposed to be born of a

virgin mother. He began his ministry at the age of thirty, he was tempted by demons who offered him the kingdoms of the earth to renounce his faith—why, the Bible has copied his history *verbatim!* Buddha, too, was supposed to be born of a virgin. As for the Christian teaching, it is a horrible medley! Its doctrine came largely from Alexandria; it was organized at Rome; its ritual came in part from Asia Minor; its ethics it got from Judea; its cosmopolitanism . . ."

"But its *real* Christianity it got from a Galilean carpenter," she finished.

"Do you know," he demanded aggressively, "that modern scholarship inclines to the view that there was no historical Jesus?"

"Well, what if there were no historical Jesus?" she returned. "Take away the human Jesus, if you will: we still have the Christ."

"Eh?"

"And Jesus himself bade his followers turn from his human personality to the Christ. Oh, if the world had only done so! If it would only do so to-day!"

"Well, tell me, where did theology get its horrible doctrine of 'free moral agency'?" he demanded. "From this carpenter?"

"Not at all," she answered promptly, "but from the depraved human mind. Don't forget, Ted, that about the year 312 A. D. paganism swallowed Christianity, and what has generally been taught in that sacred name since then has been . . ."

"Poison!" he interjected.

"You see," she went on, "after the time of the primitive followers of Jesus and his disciples there grew up two so-called Christian religions, one a *gnosis*, or wisdom, and the other a popular religion for the people. The latter was used by the Roman Emperor Constantine to absorb the former. Real Christianity then ceased to exist among mankind. The so-called popular Christian religion became a powerful human force, whose influence has gradually passed away. . ."

"Humph! and left the sort of Christianity that Heine denounced as inculcating such hound-like humility and angelic patience as to make it the surest support of despotism. Heavens! how it galled his scholarly withers."

"True Christianity," she replied, "disappeared, like an underground river. And it is just coming to the surface."

"By heaven! then it will soon disappear again, unless it is based on fact. Do you know," he went on, manifesting now a more sincere interest, "the failure of popular religion is due to its being so *unscientific?* You don't find treatises on mathematics, chemistry, or physics, dealing with such puerile

topics as angels. . . Of course," he hastened to add, his eyes twinkling, "there *are* angels—I am not so far from one now—but otherwise I'm wholly on the side of Darwin and his apes."

"You are wholly on the side of matter," she said; "you are the dupe of your five senses."

"There, you are getting into metaphysics! And metaphysical conclusions when pushed too far become chimerical. It asks us to accept as true what every natural science repudiates."

"Ted," she answered, "you are trying to believe in the reality of both matter and mind, in the incorruptible man and the corruptible mortal at the same time, and you are hopelessly mired. No wonder the problems of life seem to you such enigmas!"

"Now you are prosing again," he objected. "Let us say that I am merely in a state of suspended belief, eh?"

"Not a bit suspended, but absolutely *buried* in matter," she corrected.

"But I can't give up every human belief, as you seem to be trying to do! It . . . why, it isn't common sense! And . . . Oh, well, after all, what's the use? I really don't care. Life's short. . . And I am fixed to get through it all right. So 'drink, eat, revel, and then join us,' as the Roman funeral inscription reads."

"But, Ted, you can't afford to give up to such thoughts! It is sheer suicide! For you are confronted now with the command to begin the work of overcoming the flesh at every point. To put off doing this is suicide, for the wages of sin is death, and these wages will be paid to you while you are still waiting to reform."

"But aren't *you* committing suicide?" he countered. "You have crossed swords with everybody here. . . Aren't you a bit like the mule that refused to get off the track when the Limited was approaching?"

"But in this case I know the Limited to be powerless."

"But would I find it so if I opposed it?"

"That would rest with you, Ted," she replied. "For things have only the power that we give them."

"Theory, theory, dear girl." He suppressed a yawn. "I guess it's easier to drift with the current," he said, looking off toward the ballroom. "I'm not so dissatisfied with things as they are."

"Then if you are satisfied, Ted, why should we discuss it any further?"

"But I am *not* satisfied!" he blurted, wheeling upon her. "I want . . . I want something that I think you have and I haven't. . . And yet I won't let you give it to me!"

She again laid a hand on his arm. "Ted," she said earnestly, "I know what your trouble is: the call has come to you to *awake.*"

"And I don't want to get up!" he added, with a laugh. "I never do."

"In a way, you are like David Barach, seeking the Messiah. In more respects you resemble the rich young man who came to Jesus. He could have had the Real if he had been willing to give up the Unreal. Now you find no difficulty whatever in opposing the repulsive forms of error, but you are still attracted by its pleasing forms. Like him, you don't want to give them up. But this will ruin you, Ted, for you are denying your God."

"Oh, rubbish! Why, if God is our Father, then why—as the old Egyptian papyrus says—are some of us treated in such a step-fatherly fashion? Humph! I've always denied God, and nothing has happened to me. I'm still here, and quite plentifully supplied with victuals and drink."

"But now the command has come to you to choose," she said gently.

"Well, suppose I do, will it mean that I must adopt the views of . . . well, of the Galuth, for example? And get talked about?"

"Yes."

"You've adopted them, hook, sinker, line, and all?"

"My life is shaped by them."

He looked down at the floor, and sat thus for some time. Then he raised his eyes to hers. "Everybody in our set is laughing at you for curing that Jewish child with suggestion," he said. "I can't afford to be laughed at."

Again he fell silent, while she sat waiting; and again, after a long pause, he spoke. "Tell me, in a dozen words if you can, your concept of Christianity."

"*Thou shalt have no other gods before Me,*" she replied slowly.

"You're quoting again from the Bible," he said, smiling. "Do you know that it is a repudiated authority? For at least seven-eighths of it deals with promises to the Jews that have never been fulfilled."

"You are mistaken, Ted," she answered him quickly. "Those promises were made, not to the Jews, but to *Israel.*"

"And," he went on, apparently not sensing her reply, "we can prove that Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego could not possibly have triumphed over caloric laws."

"And caloric so-called laws," she combated, "have again and again been proved to be human *beliefs* of law."

"Look here," he said sharply, "you cured that Jewish child by suggestion . . ."

"No, Ted, I did not."

"Oh, well, that's as good a name as any for it. I see no difference between that and taking medicine. Now I take medicine . . ."

"Yes; and I do, too."

"Ah, then you admit it!"

"But you drink yours, while I *think* mine," she said.

"Eh? Oh, well . . ."

"Ted, dear," she continued, laying a hand gently on his, "you think the world has treated you very well. And you are quite satisfied. You love your sense of life—but it is an utterly false sense that is betraying you. Its end is death."

"Perfectly natural," he disputed. "I do love life, but I have no quarrel with death. It is natural, unavoidable, and consistent. And it ends all."

"It does not, Ted. You can derive no comfort from your mesmeric belief, for the human sense of life is a dream-consciousness, which passes into the dream of death, only to enter another state of consciousness . . ."

"Well, that's good. We begin all over again. So why . . ."

"But, Ted, while you will awake to another state of consciousness, that state will prove to be a far unhappier one than your present sense of life unless you improve your opportunity here to acquire 'that Mind which was in Christ Jesus' and so regulate your thinking that the next state will be a better and improved consciousness, from which you can go on to a complete demonstration over death and awake to the vision of eternal, harmonious Life. It is not only that your false thinking will result in unhappiness here, but that it will result in a worse state of consciousness to which you will awake when you are overcome by the error of death. There is your danger."

"But you talk nothing but theory, Marian. Give me proof. I am doing the best I can in this life . . ."

"Ted . . ." her voice was low and serious, "you are spiritually starving. You, like your world, are consuming with famine. Aggressive error has made popular belief appear true to you, and, like the world, you are worshiping the popular gods of mortals: sin, sickness, and death. You are materially rich. To war against the evidence of the material senses means a sacrifice, a surrender of self, that you are not willing to make . . ."

"Oh, well . . ." he yawned. "Your theories are interesting, Marian, but," with a little laugh, "not half so comforting as my beliefs about the spinal chord and the teeth." He gave another yawn. "Oh, I should worry," he said, stretching himself. "I'm

not to blame for things as they are, and I can't help the future, so . . . But we'll have another talk some time. For the present we'll just let things jog along as they are, I guess. But say! I certainly feel better for this little dispute with you. Come on, let's get into that fox-trot."

And thus did Ted Sayor bid his soul continue to bask in the glowing sun of materiality and wait, wait, wait.

Throughout the evening Alden had avoided Marian, and so deliberately that Mrs. Whittier, ever sedulously pruning her family tree, felt the necessity to mention the matter to Mrs. Cragg. The latter, waking to the disagreeable possibility of her guests sensing the strain between the two and launching an embarrassing speculation with reference to Alden's enlistment, drew her son away from his adulating friends and urged upon him the necessity of dancing with Marian. The youth shrugged his shoulders and reluctantly entered upon his task.

"I say, will you dance with me?" he said, offering himself in some confusion to the girl, whom he found sitting with Ted Sayor.

"Certainly, Alden," she answered, smiling up at him. "I'd love to have a talk with you."

And they whirled away, amid the admiring comment of those who saw them. "A beautiful girl," was Senator Chaddock's remark to Black. "You're right!" was the hearty reply. "And a match for any of us." The senator's eyes narrowed. "We'll see," he muttered under his breath, and turned away, with his thought busy with Doctor Roake.

"Haven't we anything to talk about, Alden?" Marian asked when, during their short dance, and now that they were seated, he had shown no inclination to break the embarrassing silence that lay between them.

"Yes," he returned coldly, yet glad of this opportunity, "I have something I want to say, and it's this: that you can't expect people to have much to do with you as long as you insist on getting your name up as you do."

"Why, Alden, what do you mean?"

"People are talking about your curing that Jewish child. It's your ways of doing. . . You're not conventional. You're bringing criticism down on Father Whittier. . . And people are saying other things, too."

"Yes?"

"They're talking about your being adopted, and all that. They want to know where you came from, and where you got your queer ideas. . . They say you're really that bally Galuth's daughter. Really, Marian, you can't expect to be received in society when people are discussing you that way!"

"And you feel that I should be shunned by society? But . . . then why was I asked here this evening?"

"Well, mother . . . why, she couldn't do anything else, could she?"

"Oh!" the girl exclaimed, rising.

"Now, I say!" he cried, detaining her, "don't do anything to make more talk. Take somebody else's advice for once and conduct yourself differently. Remember, I'm marrying Ethel, and I can't afford to have . . . I say, why don't you move away from Crestelridge?"

Ted Sayor appeared on the scene at that moment with Ethel Whittier on his arm. Freddy Kerl and Madeline Nence followed close in their wake. "I've brought Ethel to you, Aldy-boy," Ted loudly announced. "Caught her flirting again with Harris. You will certainly have to challenge him. I'll second you."

"Nonsense!" cried Ethel, who, despite her protestations, became noticeably more alive in color and speech when Harris was mentioned. "We've been talking 'movies.' He's going to introduce me to a friend of his, Fay Meuse, who is a 'star,' and she's promised to take us through her studio next week."

"You should have been discussing more important matters, my dear," Ted admonished with mock solemnity. "The war, for example . . ."

"Bah!" Ethel interrupted. "I am not interested."

"But aren't you going to do your bit now? Help a little?"

"No." Her tone was decisive. "I had nothing to do with starting it, and I don't intend to help it along."

"You won't do any war work?" put in Madeline in surprise. "Oh, you'll miss a lot of fun!"

"Not a stitch, not a dollar, nothing!" Ethel returned emphatically.

"And her husband a soldier!" sighed Ted.

"I say," cried Alden nervously, "let the bally war alone! She can't bear to talk about it! She . . . she's . . . temperamental . . ."

In the balcony overlooking the dancers Mrs. Whittier was sedulously cultivating Mrs. Cragg, who was dominant in the "Norman Dames." "Flumenschein is *so* comforting!" she sighed. "Sorry you missed the Culture Club last week. We decided that his poetry inclined rather toward the theosophical. He emphasizes reincarnation . . . and yet, without any real change. Oh, I don't like to think of anything changing! By the way, my dear, I am *so* interested in your topic for the next meeting of the Club. 'The Newer Psychic Developments' is a subject that is universally appealing just now. And I know

you have mastered it. Wilson expects to attend. I thought Mrs. Kerl got awfully mixed in her treatment of 'The Neo-Greek Revival' two weeks ago, didn't you? Of course, I wouldn't mention this to anybody but you. . ."

And then came the announcement of supper.

The crash of music mingled with laughter and merry talk as Ted, with Marian on his arm, entered the banquet hall below. There was crowding and good-natured jostling and raillery as the guests scrambled for seats at the many tables. At one side of the long room stood the table of honor, in the center of which Alden was located, with Ethel on his right and his happy mother on his left. Beside Mrs. Cragg sat the rector, beaming upon the assemblage with paternal benediction. Marian choked back the lump in her throat and turned eagerly to Ted. "I am so glad you came for me," she said. He laid a hand on hers without replying.

The music ceased, the buzz of conversation fell, and Alden Cragg rose in his place to announce that Father Whittier would briefly welcome them all and make an announcement that he was certain would not startle them, and that he hoped would please them as much to hear as he knew it did the rector to make. And thereupon the Reverend Wilson Whittier rose in his turn and launched his theme, while Alden sat down and hurriedly reviewed the response with which he was primed. For some moments the rector dwelt upon the cordiality of the Cragg welcome, with indubitable hints at what such welcome meant. He dwelt upon the social largess of the Craggs, upon their love for beautiful Crestelridge, and their spirit of true Christianity as manifested in their tender regard for their fellow men. Then he took up his real subject, which was the magnificent patriotism of the Craggs, and the splendid sacrifice which they were making in offering thus the scion of the house to the mother-country in her hour of need. . .

"Too bad Alden won't have an opportunity to live up to this," murmured Ted.

The rector drove on. He believed, he said, that America should have remained neutral, but, being drawn in, "let us," he magniloquently urged, "in the words of our President, 'fight for such a universal dominion of right as shall bring peace and safety to all nations and make the world itself at last free'." The rector waxed increasingly eloquent as he proceeded from point to point. He lost himself in his peroration. . .

"Is he talking about Alden or Nathan Hale?" mused Ted, smothering a grin. Harris Chaddock sank down in his chair with lips curling. "It is my recollection," he whispered to Madeline Nence, "that G. Washington was the father of his country . . . but it may have been Alden."

And then, amid the plaudits of his auditors, the rector proposed a toast in a very light wine to this brave young Briton, descendant of the sturdy Norman conquerors, who, though he might not be summoned to the scene of carnage, nevertheless stood with drawn sword, beneath the banner of St. George, ready . . . ready . . .

There was a slight commotion at the door, and Squires, Alden's secretary, was observed to enter the banquet hall hurriedly and hasten to his master's side. The rector stopped short in the midst of his most moving encomium. Heads were raised. Eyes darted from the rector to the Craggs. Squires bent and whispered to Alden. The latter listened for a moment, then gasped aloud. His form became rigid. He struggled to rise. His face went deathly white. His knees smote together, and he fell back again in his chair, in a state of collapse.

"Alden!" Mrs. Cragg sprang up and bent over him. "What is it? Oh . . . !" She turned, shaking, to Squires. "What . . . is . . . it?" she demanded in a hoarse whisper.

"Word from Colonel Tenn, Madam!" the secretary said haltingly. "Mr. Cragg is . . . is ordered to report in camp . . . immediately! His regiment is leaving to-night . . . for the war!"

CHAPTER 20

WITH Mrs. Cragg's piercing cry ringing in her ears, Marian sprang to her feet. Ted Sayor grasped her arm and tried to speak to her; but she shook herself free of him. Her eyes were wide, and her heart pounding. This was *her* work! She had wrested Alden's problem from him and hurled him, weak, defenseless, into the hell of war! It was what fear had made her do! . . . With a little cry she rushed toward him.

Mrs. Cragg had flung herself about her son, who still sat stunned and motionless. Some of the guests had sprung up and were hurrying to them. Others sat dazed by the suddenness of it all. The rector had grasped his fleeing wits, and now stood trying to raise his voice above the confusion. "My friends!" he cried tremulously, "Great Britain calls across the waves, and our gallant young host responds!" It was an effort as futile as well meant.

Marian came to the stricken mother's side as she knelt by her son's chair. Mrs. Cragg raised her eyes upon the girl. Frenzy gave strength to the woman's enfeebled limbs, and she rose quickly. "You! . . . you have sent him to his death!"

she cried; "to his death! Do you hear? . . . to his *death!*" Her voice rose shrilly, then fell in a long, quivering moan.

Gasps and exclamations of amazement burst from those guests who heard this further revelation, and there was a hurried exchange of glances and nods. Ted Sayor, who had followed Marian, seized her and pulled her back from the desperate woman. Mrs. Whittier sank into a chair, half fainting. Mrs. Tellus and Mrs. Black threw their arms about Mrs. Cragg and persuaded her into the seat that the rector had placed for her. The Chaddocks, with odd looks in their faces, assisted Alden to his feet.

Alden, his senses slowly returning, now struggled for the calm that he did not feel. "There, mother," he said huskily, and forcing a weak smile, "it . . . may not be so jolly bad, ye know. I say," turning to the guests crowding about, "I'm deuced cut up to . . . to have it turn up this way . . . like this, ye know. . ." His voice failed. He stood shaking. Then he permitted Squires to take his arm and lead him, unresisting, away.

Again the agitated rector strove to rise to the critical occasion. "My friends!" he called loudly above the chaos, "it is fitting that Alden's summons should have come at this hour, for it finds him in uniform and prepared! Let us be like him, for our call, too, may come at an hour when we think not! A cheer, I say! A cheer for our gallant soldier, who goes forth to battle for your freedom and mine!"

The strain snapped. A shout broke from the guests; then a loud and prolonged cheering. The serving-men and caterers joined in. The band struck up *"God Save the King!"* Some sang; some shouted; some danced. And amid the uproar Mrs. Cragg was led, groping, from the room, followed by the Whittiers—Marian excepted—the Chaddocks and the Telluses.

In Alden's suite Mrs. Cragg fell upon a divan and wrung her hands. "Oh, it can't be! it can't be!" she moaned. "My boy! my boy! Oh, where is Doctor Roake? Send for him! Wire him! Telephone . . ."

"I'll call Colonel Tenn," said Senator Chaddock. He took up the instrument from the stand. All waited, tense with expectancy. "Then it is true, Colonel?" they heard the senator say. "Ordered overseas? But . . ."

A hollow groan burst from Mrs. Cragg, and she sank back fainting. Alden threw out an arm against the wall to support himself. While the other women ministered to Mrs. Cragg, Mrs. Whittier's practical mind began to function more steadily. This crisis was an opportunity. She turned to her daughter. "Go to him, Ethel," she said.

Ethel, who had followed the proceedings thus far, not without a certain enjoyment in their novelty, moved perfunctorily in Alden's direction, wondering what were best to do in the extraordinary circumstances. Alden looked up, and as his eyes fell upon her he gasped. "Ethel! We must be married . . . before I go!"

The girl stopped short, and stood staring at him open-mouthed. This was a dénouement that had not occurred to her.

"We must be married to-night!" Alden continued excitedly. "I say, Father Whittier, you will marry us now?"

A cry broke from Ethel, and she started back. Her mother came quickly to her side and put an arm about her. "It must be as Alden says, dear," she urged.

"Alden is right," said the rector in a shaking voice. "Senator," turning to the elder Chaddock, "call up the City Clerk's office . . . or his house. We can procure the license, and I will marry them in his office on the way to camp! Ethel, Mama, all of you, get ready! Alden, how much time will you need to pack?"

Ethel wrenched herself from her mother's arm and backed away. "No! no! I will not be married to-night!" she protested vehemently. "No!"

"Ethel!" Alden and Mrs. Whittier exclaimed in unison. Stifled gasps came from the Telluses. The rector seemed rooted to the spot. Harris Chaddock smiled faintly. The girl stood facing them defiantly.

"But . . . Ethel! I am going away . . . perhaps for a long time! Why . . . why not now?" Alden gasped, scarce comprehending her refusal.

"Ethel, you are betrothed to him! The circumstances make it not only proper, but your duty, to marry him before he leaves to-night!" the rector cried aghast.

"No!"

"But . . . you are betrothed. . ."

"I will wait for him! We will be married when he comes back!"

"Ethel . . .!" Alden moved toward her. He was desperate. What did all this portend to the proud Cragg name? "It *must* be now!"

"No! We will be engaged! I will wait for you! We will be married then!"

Mrs. Whittier stood dumfounded. What did the girl mean? Refusal to become a soldier's wife! Rejection of a millionaire! Of a Cragg! She seized her daughter's arm.

Ethel threw her off. "If you touch me," she cried, "I'll scream for help!"

Then the rector tried conciliation, for the girl had ever been temperamental. Oh, yes, she loved Alden . . . that was a silly question! But this was too sudden; it took her all unawares! It was not right to *force* her into marriage! If Alden loved her he would be glad to wait for her. . . Protests, appeals, threats failed; she stood out against them, inexorable and defiant. Upon their continued insistence she stamped her foot, she sobbed. . .

Then, as they stood back defeated, she became calm, and even went to Alden and permitted him to take her in his arms. She held her tear-stained face up to him to be kissed. She insisted that she loved him. She knew he would show his love for her by taking her vows of fealty with him. And when he returned, a hero, they would be married . . . in St. Jude's . . . a *real* wedding. . .

Marian had remained with Ted, struggling with her chaotic thought; then she flew to Alden's suite and sought entrance, but the rector closed the door in her face and sternly forbade her to intrude. She returned below and waited, unmindful of Ted's tender solicitude, heedless of the questioning glances directed at her, of curling lips, the lifted brows, the whisperings connecting her name with the evening's distressing events. And when at length the Craggs descended, supported by the Whittiers, Chaddocks and Telluses, she rushed to Alden and seized his hand.

The youth started, under the shock of her presence, the audacity of her touch, as from the contamination of a pariah. "Alden!" she cried, choking with the fullness of what she would say. For a moment his accusing eyes flashed an irrevocable condemnation upon her; then he thrust her violently from him—so violently that, but for Ted, she would have fallen—and passed on. A few moments later she saw the heir of "Craggmont," deaf to the sympathetic farewells and solicitous good wishes of the throng that pressed him, go out into the night.

"Take me away, Ted," she pleaded. "Take me . . . home."

The guests fell back, whispering, nodding, pointing, sneering, to permit the girl to pass through. There were low exclamations, murmurs, suppressed titters. She needed not these to inform her that she stood now alone against an outraged society, whose doors had closed behind her.

Yet one there was who understood, in part. "Marian," said Ted, very gently, as they sped toward the rectory in his powerful car, "I see it all now. And you are done for. But I want you to know that I will stand by you. Count me your friend . . . I would ask to be more, if I dared . . . if I were

worthy . . . I'd take you and flout this whole damned rabble! . . ."

"Don't, Ted, please," she begged. "I love you, Ted, as a dear, dear friend, but . . . I am no longer my own."

It was a wild scene that was enacted before the entrance to the concentration camp in the drizzling rain that bleak night, when Mrs. Cragg was torn from her idolized son. Drenched and mud-stained, she was carried in a dead faint back to her limousine and hurried to the rectory, from whence a long-distance call went throbbing to Doctor Roake in Washington, and instructions sped to Squires and Jedkins in "Craggmont" to bring the mocking party to a close and bid the maids prepare their mistress' bed. . .

It was a tense scene that was enacted by Marian, alone in her room in the rectory, through that long, chill night—alone, and craving the light, struggling to pierce the heavy gloom, praying for guidance, for wisdom to do the duty of the hour, to solve her problem now so interwoven with that of the youth whom she had sent into the fire. With the first timid sunbeams that kissed the tender buds of the willows bordering fair Crestelridge came the light. And it came as perhaps came the call to Abram, long since, to go out from Ur and its idols of clay and demonstrate the presence of God in a land unknown. . .

It was a rending scene that was staged in the rector's study during the flagging hours of that black night while the harassed man, with his ears throbbing under the awful command to "Choose!" struggled vainly against the demands of his desperate wife and infuriated daughter and subscribed to the sentence of exile which they passed upon Marian. At dawn he raised his head from his arms, whither it had dropped when they left him. Marian had entered. She went to him and put an arm tenderly about his shoulders. Then she bent and kissed him. "Father," she whispered, "I love you. I love you all."

He sprang to his feet, stifling a cry. His arms went about her and drew her close. "Marian!" he cried in his agony of soul. "Marian!"

She waited; but the words which he would have uttered died on his lips, and others usurped their place. "You must . . . go. I will talk with you . . . after breakfast . . . about your future."

She took his face between her hands and again kissed him. A moment more and he was again alone—more alone than he had ever dreamed it possible to be. . .

And far out at sea, where the sunbeams danced on the

white-tipped waves, another scene was enacted, a pantomime more effective than spoken words. Alden Cragg, sitting on the edge of a rough bunk in the muggy depths of a great troopship, turned as a shadow fell across him and glanced up at a man in uniform beside him. Then his face went white, and he stifled a cry. The man was David Barach!

THOU ISRAEL

BOOK 2

AND in the fourth watch of the night Jesus went unto them, walking on the sea.

—*Matthew.*

THOU ISRAEL

CHAPTER 1

AGAIN the leaden hammer had fallen; another prophetic hour had struck. In the language of the seers Daniel's interpretation of his own and the troubled dream of Nebuchadnezzar had found partial and striking fulfillment—was destined to find it complete—in the joint duration of the material empires of Babylon, Persia, Greece, and Rome. The lifetime of the four-fold Image of Gentile monarchy, together with the period of the four beasts, would constitute the full "times of the Gentiles," the reign of the insane mortal mind, the long day of error before Truth should appear in the consciousness of man.

And verily, as if in strict conformity therewith, while the hammer tolled the flagging hours, did the mighty empires of Babylon, Persia, Greece, and Rome rise, conquer the world, and sink again into the dust of ages. Into this long, dark era was projected the prophetic measure of "time, times, and a half"; and this great bisection period of the full "seven times", measured on the lunar scale from both the beginning and the close of the Hebrew Captivity, had witnessed the fall of Rome in A. D. 476, and the capture of holy Jerusalem by the caliph Omar in the year of our Lord 637. Thus did the first half of the period of mortal insanity run out, with prophecy unerringly fulfilled.

But insane though the human mind had shown itself in this first half of the "seven times", its red course of blood and rapine in the second half even more than justified Carlyle's comment on human history as the record of a world gone mad. If the former had fulfilled Scriptural prophecy as to the revelation of the Word, so the latter manifested error's fell attempts to destroy it. With the close of the first bisection period came the splitting of imperial Rome into the ten kingdoms symbolized by the ten horns which sprang from the dreadful "fourth beast" of Daniel's dream—kingdoms which divided the heritage

of old Rome and remained politically independent units, but which still had one mind—though a densely material one—and yielded their power and strength to the "little horn" which grew up in their midst with "eyes like the eyes of a man, and a mouth speaking great things." The crash of imperial Rome had cleared the way for the rise of the Papacy. And simultaneously with it rose the Mohammedan apostasy, symbolized by the second "little horn" and interpreted in the blighting life of Islam. These two little horns, prophesied to dominate the second half of the "times of the Gentiles," appeared as religio-political dynasties from the ashes of imperial Rome, and waxed strong and insolent among the ten other horns, the constituent kingdoms of the Holy Roman Empire.

Still clanged the great hammer; still fell the prophetic hours. The full "seven times" of Nebuchadnezzar's insanity, as measured on the solar scale of the Gentiles, and dating from Daniel's removal to Babylon, closed in the fateful year 1914, with its hideous outburst of Hohenzollern madness that engulfed the world. Measured from the actual date of Nebuchadnezzar's accession to the throne, and the year in which he dreamed of the Image, it terminated in the portentous year 1917, when Manasseh trod the waves at Ephraim's anxious call.

"Strange, strange prophecy!" says a gaping world. "Strange fulfillment!" Yet far from strange is the prediction of evil's end, for error is finite. Nor is it strange that, because of her evil thoughts, blindness in part is happened to Israel, and the vision closed till the scales of matter shall drop from her eyes. The spiritually-thinking patriarchs knew that certain results must follow definite causes; and their knowledge of the limited workings of error was such that they might foresee the eras of human history in which they would fail. It was sure prophecy to predict the advent of a Messiah, for Truth must sometime appear in human consciousness and destroy the error that counterfeits the Universe of Mind. And with a decreasing sense of limitation, due to deeper spiritualization of thought, there came to the patriarchs greater powers of prophetic interpretation. The Christ, they foresaw, must of necessity appear among that people possessed of the idea of the One God; and these were the Hebrews. The prophetic interpreters of the sacred writings did not make mysterious plunges into the future, yet they were compelled in a way to foretell the course of unchecked error and set a limit to its spurious reign. To understand Truth was likewise to be able to foresee Truth's inevitable workings. To prophesy that "Israel after the flesh" must give place to "Israel according to the Spirit" was but to say that Truth must eventually be seen triumphant over its

spurious opposite, error. God, as Mind, knows the past, the present, and the future, which constitute the eternal NOW, the only acceptable "time." And to that thought which is in rapport with this divine Mind, these must likewise, in the degree of this rapport, be an open book.

To Marian Whittier, chronology appeared in an aspect unrecognized by adherents of the popular systems of religion. She knew that the ancient prophets had deeply penetrated the labyrinth of the human mind and recorded what they saw there; but she likewise knew that what they predicted was not inevitable, else were mankind ruled by fatalism. That which the prophets foretold was always inevitable, however, if the human mind continued to cling to its false beliefs, to the lie about God, and to the popular gods of mortals: sin, sickness, and death. This manner of regarding prophecy removes its fatalistic and mysterious aspects, and renders the escape from evil always possible. The prophets could perceive the occurrence of evil events; they could also see how these could be prevented. Marian realized that those who merely await the fulfillment of predicted happenings are thereby aiding in the fulfillment of those very happenings, whether they be good or evil; while those who realize the truly metaphysical character of prophecy can lift it from dependence upon mere futurity and restore to it its beneficent character, thus enabling it to render inestimable service to men in the working out of their salvation by pointing out the inevitableness consequent upon the quality of men's thoughts. Then those who discern the mental sign may overcome the threatened evil by destroying the false beliefs that would produce it. All good is at hand; prophecy does not postpone its fulfillment, but indicates that the realization of good in human consciousness is a function of righteousness. And righteousness is naught but right-thinking about God and Man. It is not mankind that awaits the blessings, but the blessings await a righteous mankind.

But who shall avoid the evil happenings? Verily, Marian knew, those who have the true idea of God and reflect it. To the unregenerate human mind the eras of dire events prophesied by the prophets are bound to come. They but indicate stages of mortal thought—stages which the true seers of God may avoid, even as Enoch, Elisha, and Jesus overcame the world and escaped those things predicted to come upon the false thinker. In view of such predictions Jesus said: "See that ye be not troubled." He knew that even human history would be made to witness to God and glorify Him; and those who read the mortal record may see great systems of iniquity rise and flourish while men give them their unwise support, but fall

when Truth dawns upon mortal consciousness. Date after date of human history fulfills prophecy and witnesses to the triumph of Truth—and yet Truth is always triumphant. The prophecy of good or evil is always fulfilled. Heine, seeing the trend of German thought, could unerringly predict the return of the old Scandinavian gods. The reëstablishment of Odin in Potsdam was inevitable.

Thus had reasoned Marian Whittier. And so searchingly had she studied the Scriptures, and in particular the striking prophecies of Daniel and the deep sayings of the Nazarene and his disciples, that she had indicated, long since and amid the ridicule of her associates, the probable year when the German rulers would stake their fortunes, spiritual and material, on a gamble with error unequalled in the history of man, and attempt to convert the world into an autocracy governed by mesmerism. But she knew that it was the spiritual that alone was real. The literal fulfillment of prophecy was but the counterpart of this in human consciousness, where mortal mind is a law unto itself and predicts and causes the fulfillment of its own predictions. That which God does is done from the beginning; the counterfeit human mind sees these acts of Principle dimly, interprets them in terms of matter, and posits them as eventualizing at intervals in its limiting concept of eternity as measured time. The outward and literal event externalizes always the fermentation taking place in the human mind. Marian knew that the mortal mind had fabricated a colossal image with feet of clay, and she knew that the "stone cut without hands" was the Truth that would break it in pieces and expose its sham. This Truth was the Reality of God, and the nothingness of the material concept. If Daniel's prophecy of the destruction of error had been "sealed" till the "time of the end," and world events were now fast demonstrating the impotence of the presumptuous claims of error, then the end of the mesmerism must be not far off. The breaking up of false beliefs was proceeding apace in the violent thought-upheaval manifesting as the war of the nations. Knowing in part the destiny of Britain as keeper of the literal Word, the girl foresaw the Palestine campaign and the imminence of the hour when the treading down of literal Jerusalem would cease. Spiritual Jerusalem, the "city with foundations," was free; the fact must be manifested in human consciousness. To measure the full "seven times" of Daniel's prophecy from Nebuchadnezzar's accession and see it fall within the year 1917 was not necessary to a confirmation of her belief that the sacred city would be cleansed in that prophetic year. Yet she viewed with gratitude this corroboration by human chronology, even

as she did when, by the lunar scale, she saw the "extended week" of Daniel, measured from the Mohammedan Hegira, fall within this same closing year. She had looked down the corridors of forty centuries; she had seen the unsealing of that witness to God which rose amid the pollutions of idolatrous Egypt; had seen the rise and fall of the four great empires of Daniel's prophecy; had watched the little horns insidiously grow and menace the Word and crumble again; and had said: "These are indeed the last days; error is powerless, and that saving fact is being at last acknowledged by men."

It was because she had foreseen the result of Alden Cragg's thought-processes that Marian had thrown herself between him and the evil that was driving hard upon him. Because she knew that America must enter the war that year, she saw him an enemy alien, stripped of wealth, position, character, freedom, life itself, by those who now appeared to afford him support and protection. What she had discerned in the mentalities of Otto Hoeffel and Doctor Roake had stricken her with sudden fear and for the moment blinded her to the vision of the "everlasting arms" beneath. When the scales of fear dropped from her eyes and she again faced the enemy, she found herself with new problems whose complexity made the former ones appear simple by comparison.

In the eyes of all but a certain few of the Crestelridge gentility Alden Cragg had departed for the war a hero. The almost simultaneous disappearance of Marian Whittier, on the other hand, gave grateful occasion to busy tattlers to minutely dissect their distorted concept of her character and find therein elements that caused much lifting of brows and many insinuating nods. Again was the harassed Mrs. Whittier put to her wits' ends to cover the girl's departure with adequate explanations. "You see," she nervously proffered, "she had long wanted to go to the city and get into some branch of the service. Now that America has entered the war we could not well forbid it, could we?" And the rector always vigorously confirmed this thin explanation, though it was noticed that when he spoke of Marian—which was never voluntarily—he appeared to become abstracted, and his voice had a tinge of sadness.

To Ethel it all meant liberty, with Alden abroad and the rectory free of the hampering influence that Marian's presence had always exerted upon her. Marian would not return, Ethel was assured. As for Alden—in her heart of hearts she knew that his fate was a matter of indifference to her. She had all the joy of possessing a soldier lover, and none of the limitations which marriage certainly would have brought. Her own prestige had been greatly heightened by betrothal to him. She had

the now augmented attention of Harris Chaddock. With the selfish, domineering Alden and the irritating Marian both out of the way, Ethel would leave the management of the rector to her mother, whom she could bend to her every caprice, and would now take the fling that her starved soul had craved for years. The war had filled her cup to brimming.

As for Harris Chaddock, Wallie Black, Ted Sayor, young Kerl, and their cronies, their agitation over the selective draft so occupied their thought that the departure of Alden and Marian caused only a passing ripple. Harris soon learned that his immunity was assured; he was become necessary to Doctor Roake. And he swelled immeasurably with the sense of his own importance and his admiration for the great doctor. Wallie Black and Freddy Kerl awaited the draft with the assurance that, having been placed in easy government positions through the influence of Senator Chaddock, their safety was secured. And Ted Sayor, after several interviews with Doctor Roake, was made to realize at length that his immunity from army service could be purchased. The cost? His soul. And he pondered for a while amid the luxuries of the International Club, then closed with the bargain. But his face flushed as he clasped the hand of his faithful "Boots" and bade him luck when the latter, straight and natty in his shining uniform, came to say farewell.

"You're a fool, Boots, to enlist," he said, striving for the jocularity that had left him. "You might have escaped the draft."

"As you say, sir, as you say. But my honor, sir, would not permit it," the former lackey answered promptly. "The slacker, sir, is a skunk." And Ted felt, as he heard it, that the universe had suddenly tilted and depressed his plane immeasurably below that of his loyal valet.

With the hum of preparations surrounding it, and the disturbance caused within by the events cited, Crestelridge came as near to being set agog as was possible to so staid and buttressed a community. But still another shock was to come in the enlistment of the rector's assistant, George Earl. "I go," he announced to the Reverend Wilson Whittier, "partly because I regard it a duty, partly to afford my mind surcease. In this uniform I am for the first time in my life an honest man. I had become lost in the maze of theological subtleties and speculations in which you still flounder; my faith was wavering; my creeds had crumbled. Oh, no, I shall not go as a chaplain—though I might have done so. God forbid! I could not preach falsehoods to those brave fellows who are there giving their lives for you and me. I could not pretend to usher the dying into a heaven that I know does not exist. I go as a plain

soldier. And if I die for humanity, I know that in death I shall be nobler far than I have ever been in life."

To Madam Galuth, Marian's departure from Crestelridge was a promise and the beginning of prophetic fulfillment. The girl had come to her the morning after the Cragg ball and had sunk upon the floor beside her. "I know what is best for me to do now," she murmured, smiling up through her tears at the woman. "Kudur-Lagamar has captured Lot. I shall follow him."

It was as if the girl had become calm in the presence of a mighty call. In humility and patience she had sought through that dark night to know the duty of the hour; under a benign Providence that knowledge *had* to come.

And yet, should she have done differently? Madam Galuth seemed to read this question in the girl's thought. "I cannot say, dearie, that you should not have done just what you did, even from the first." Then she turned to a table and took up an envelope. "Take this to the woman whose New York address is given here," she said quietly. "She is leaving soon for England. She is a nurse in the British army, and has been here recuperating. I have already arranged for you to return with her. You are going to London to enter the British service. These letters will get you through New York. You will procure your passport while making your other preparations there under the direction of this woman. The way is open for you."

Marian stared at her in amazement. "But how could you have known that I was going?" she gasped.

"We cannot tell *how* we know, dearie," was the reply. "But the thought came to me, when I first learned of Alden's enlistment, that it would work out this way. And I prepared for it."

Marian did not return to the rectory, for there was that in her thought after leaving Madam Galuth that forbade it. Had she done so, she would have encountered Doctor Roake and the rector impatiently awaiting her.

CHAPTER 2

A MONTH later Marian was in London. Despite the rush of war, the close surveillance, the penetrating questionings, the stubborn refusals, the limitations, obstacles, hazards, the gates of two nations had opened, as if by the touch of a hidden hand, the one to emit, the other to receive her.

To the tense strain which gripped London, to the feverish haste, to the eager glances, the moist eyes, to all the varied and now chronic sights of affliction, privation, sorrow, to the dogged

preparation and ceaseless outlay of substance and life, Marian was apparently oblivious. She moved with the calm of invincible determination, of fixedness in the pursuit of Right, and of assurance of ultimate success. The young English woman with whom she had made the voyage had proved an unerring guide and an agreeable companion, and Marian viewed her forthcoming separation from her with deep regret. "But our ways divide now," the young woman said, "for Madam Galuth directed me to take you to Penberry Hall and leave you there."

Penberry Hall! Marian stared incredulously at her companion. What, she asked, did this young woman know of Simeon Penberry? Why, nothing—excepting that he was an eccentric character, with a reputation for oddity world-wide, and was heart and soul in this war. His home was now a hospital. And Marian, as she pursued her way, that same day out to Penberry Hall, reflected that of the man she herself knew just as little. True, he was Ethel's grandfather, and she his favorite—so Mrs. Whittier had ever been blithe to relate. He was immensely rich, and Ethel was named in his will as sole heir to it all. Simeon Penberry had once visited the Whittiers, years gone, and before they came to Crestelridge, Marian knew; but, from what she had gathered, he was a crusty old soul who preferred the Rand above London, and the mining camps of our own far West to the distractions of New York. Marian had never seen him. Madam Galuth had never mentioned him to her; what the woman's motive in sending her to him now, Marian could not even conjecture. "But," she reflected, "like Abraham, I shall obey."

The credentials which the nurse presented at the gateway sufficed to procure them admission to the Penberry grounds; but once inside, the young woman halted. "I am instructed to leave you here," she said. "You must go the rest of the way alone. This is Madam Galuth's wish." With which she clasped Marian's hand, and turned back.

Marian stood for a moment confused; then she set her face resolutely and started up the long, broad walk to the Hall. "It is for me to prove, now," she murmured. "I see it. And I must *know!*"

The great park surrounding the Hall was strewn with chairs, cots, and benches; innumerable hammocks were swung among the great trees. Soldiers, wounded, disabled, convalescent, hundreds of them, glanced up at the girl as she proceeded determinedly up the winding path, then remained staring in admiration and wonder. Presently the Hall itself loomed up before her, a gigantic pile, fairly overwhelming in its sheer immensity. The building was gray with age, set with towers

buried in ivy, and provided with wings of odd sizes and shapes projecting here and there that gave the appearance of having been thrown from time to time and with bad aim at the original structure. Its walls were of a thickness to withstand the assaults of any mediæval force of marauders; its great rooms echoed with their own vastness; its floors continually rose and fell in differing levels; its innumerable apartments constituted a labyrinth where one would lose one's way at the very outset and be forced to peer constantly from the window embrasures to pick up one's course. Before the broad stone steps of the main entrance stood a group of men of distinguished appearance. Among them was a tall, straight figure, with thick white hair, heavy eyebrows, and long moustaches. As Marian approached, this man turned and looked at her. His eyes widened. He stepped out and seemed to be awaiting her. She came straight to him. "I am looking for Mr. Penberry," she said with a smile.

The man regarded her for some moments in silence. The others turned and stared curiously at the girl. At length the man said slowly: "Why do you wish to see him? Who are you?"

"I am Miss Whittier, from Crestelridge, New York," she returned eagerly. It occurred to her not to mention the name of Madam Galuth now, but to stand on her own ability to prove.

"Whittier!" the man exclaimed. "Not Wilson Whittier's . . ."

"I am his daughter," she said.

"Damme! But . . . you don't look it. Still, that was twelve years or more . . . I say, you claim to be Wilson Whittier's daughter? My *granddaughter?* What's your name?"

"Marian."

He fell back with a snort. "Ha! you impostor! Her name is Ethel! Out! Where's a guard? . . ." He turned to signal, but wheeled again upon the girl as he caught her reply.

"I am Marian Whittier, Ethel's sister by adoption."

"Adop . . . !" He stopped short. "Wilson Whittier has no adopted daughter!" he said sharply. He paused again and stared down at her. His face clouded, and his brows were drawn sharply together. "I don't know you," he finished coldly.

Marian's smile left her face; but only for an instant. Then it came back brighter than before. "But, don't you see?" she said eagerly, "I am giving you an opportunity to know me."

At this one of the other men in the group broke into a laugh. "I say, Penberry," he cried, "you're in luck!"

"Old fellows like you don't have such opportunities often!" laughed another. "By the Lord, spy or no spy, *I* wouldn't blow it!"

Penberry stood, still looking hard at the girl. "How did you get past the sentry at the gate?" he suddenly demanded.

Marian told him simply; told him also the name of the young nurse who had brought her, and gave the city address where she might be found. "But . . . Damme! Why are you *here?*" the puzzled man insisted.

She laughed lightly. "I have come all the way from America to work with you," she said.

"Work with me! . . . Br-r-r!" His mouth remained open, but speech delayed. Then, slowly, while he stared at the girl, his brow cleared. He raised his head and looked off beyond her. What he saw, none but himself knew. His eyes roved back again to hers. "When did Wilson Whittier adopt you?" he asked in a low voice.

"When I was a babe, more than twenty years ago," she answered.

He seemed to start, but recovered himself and remained silent. The girl stood, still smiling up into his face. The others watched the two in growing wonder.

Then he wheeled upon his companions. "We will consider our interview ended," he said.

"Not so jolly fast!" objected one of the men, his features working under a suppressed smile. "Don't forget that you asked me to prescribe a tonic. I don't intend to permit you to beat me out of my fee so easily. I shall prescribe this very good-looking young spy for you, and my fee will be fifty pounds, sir."

Penberry was staring again at Marian. And again there was that far-away look in his gray eyes. He seemed to be striving to coördinate his thoughts, to piece together something . . . something. . .

"Very well, Doctor," he said, rousing abruptly. "I'll take the tonic. Your fee is very reasonable, very!"

A few minutes thereafter Marian Whittier sat alone with Simeon Penberry in the small but thoroughly appointed room which he had reserved for himself in his great house. Carefully and in full detail she answered the searching questions which he shot at her, until the man was almost convinced that she had really lived in Crestelridge, and that her knowledge of its people was exact. . .

"Now tell me," he demanded, "the name of the woman you say sent you to me."

Marian knew that she must reply. "Her name is Madam Galuth," she said.

He shook his head. "I never heard of her. But she must know me." He laughed. "Many do. I've somewhat of a repu-

tation, ye know. Very good. And now do you still refuse to tell me your father's name?"

"But I do not know," she insisted. "The Whittiers would never talk about him, excepting to say that my ancestors were all a bad lot. But I am not interested now in my ancestors. They don't need me; but there is some one else who does. And . . . Oh, Mr. Penberry, I am sure I have been sent to you because you are the only one who can help me!"

"H'm! to find that young Cragg, eh? Yes, I know the family well. Father was a good sort, but the mother and son . . . Br-r-r! they're damnable!"

She looked up at him with a wistful smile. "I don't think you understand," she said in a low tone.

"Bah!" he ejaculated, "you're in love with the cad. Deuced romantic, but quite like you irresponsible American girls, to chase a young soldier across the sea. . . But imagine old Penberry playing cupid! Ha! ha! But, I say, you are a damnably pretty sort; you might have made a better choice than young Cragg. Humph! I suppose it's his money. . ." He did not conclude the remark, for as he looked into the girl's face he felt a surge of shame.

"But I can help you to understand," she went on; "though it may take some time. Oh, if you will help me to reach him, I will come back and tell you why I have done this!"

"Damme!" he suddenly broke out again, "if you are Wilson Whittier's adopted daughter, then why in God's name did he never tell me of you? Br-r-r!" He sprang to his feet and sharply rang a bell. To the orderly who answered the summons he said briskly: "Send a cable to the mayor of Crestelridge, New York." Then he leaned over the young man's shoulder and swiftly dictated a message in a voice so low that Marian did not catch the words. When the orderly had left the room, Penberry came and stood before the girl, his hands jammed into his trousers' pockets and his eyes bent upon her searchingly. "Supposing I could say where this fellow is," he said sharply, "how do you expect to reach him?"

"I . . . I can not say, just now," she answered, looking up at him. "Perhaps I might go as a nurse."

"Nurse? Bah! And wait for him to be shot, so's to hang over his cot and babble sweet nonsense, eh? Besides, have you had any training as a nurse? No? Not even a practical nurse, eh? No more fitted for the hardships, for the . . . the . . ." He paused. Again shame smote him. Wonder succeeded shame as he looked down with undisguised admiration upon the beautiful face so eagerly, wistfully raised to his. "Now, if you wanted to stay here," he continued, but in gentler tones,

"you could be of some use. There is desperate need of women workers here. . ."

Marian rose. She shook her head. "This is not my place," she said simply. "Please tell me, is it possible for you to find where a British soldier is serving? Could you learn where Alden Cragg is now?"

He laughed. "I most certainly could."

She came close to him. "Will you . . . for me?" she said.

"No!"

They stood looking at each other for a moment; then her head dropped and she turned to go. But he quickly stepped in front of her. "Not so fast, young woman!" he snapped. "I will have a room prepared for you here. . . But if you are a spy, that's just what you want, eh?"

CHAPTER 3

DAYS passed, astonishing days, and Marian Whittier, to her amazement and consternation, remained a prisoner in Penberry Hall. True, she was treated with utmost deference, particularly after the irascible old master of the Hall received a cablegram from New York that should have quite destroyed his distrust of her story. "So Wilson Whittier has an adopted daughter," he mused. "Damme! the sly dog. But this girl . . . She must be investigated," he pleaded with himself as an excuse for further detaining her. And he informed her that the Government required her detention—"Merely technical, ye know"—for a few more days. "Why didn't I know about her before?" he exclaimed to himself aloud. "Why didn't I know that she was Wilson Whittier's daughter? I'd have had her with me years ago! Br-r-r!" And, as he paced back and forth in his room, buffeted by his conflicting sentiments: "Damme! is she duping me? I wonder! But she's been raised in ignorance of me, that's certain. But why? No! By heaven! She knows all about me, and she's here to . . ." But he could get no further. Then his resurgent suspicions would drive him back into her presence to ply her with questions that plumbed her very soul. "Where did Whittier find you?" he would demand again and again. "Where'd you get those brown eyes, that hair?" And he would go away muttering: "Send her to young Cragg? Never! Br-r-r-r!"

With this unexpected delay Marian became restive. She plead for release. But Simeon Penberry would entertain no such thought. She was fascinating him, and he contrived to

spend hours in her presence. He guarded her from all other males with the jealousy of a fiery young lover. He drew out her odd views of life, and pondered them long when again alone; he demanded her history over and over; he roared over her conflict with Crestelridge society. And then, when he had left her, he would storm aloud: "Why didn't I know about her before? Who is she? Where did she get those eyes? That hair? Damme!"

But always his suspicions would get the whip-hand, and he would stealthily seek to draw from her a hidden and sinister motive. "You played your cards well in coming to me," he insinuated one day when he was in a particularly trying mood. "I am rich. . . Why, Damme! I can't count my wealth! Ha! that makes your brown eyes sparkle, eh? How'd ye like to be my heir? You're my granddaughter, you say, by adoption." And he chuckled craftily.

She smiled up at him. "Your wealth is nothing to me," she answered.

"But," he went on cunningly, "I'm old, past eighty; haven't much longer to tarry, eh? And you might, you know . . . you might . . . Oh, I'm not saying so, y'understand . . . but you might get a slice of it some day, eh?"

She studied him a moment before replying. Then she shook her head. "You are showing me that you haven't learned very much from the war," she said slowly. "I do not want your money. If you should give it all to me I would use it for others. Why, I learned *that* in Crestelridge. Those rich people there are miserably poor and alone just because of their money—not the money they spend, but the extra money that they do *not* spend. And that, I know, has been your trouble. You were never happy when you were spending it on yourself, never happy until you gave yourself to this work," indicating with a gesture the great Hall now metamorphosed into a hospital. "And you are not quite happy yet, are you?" She smiled as she saw him start. "I have come to make you happy," she said softly. "Don't you see it?"

Very shortly Marian saw in the obduracy of Simeon Penberry the working of that same subtle mesmerism that would destroy the Word. "But it can *not* delay me!" she insisted over and over. "It has no power!" Evil could not trap her thus. Yet toward Simeon Penberry she would permit none but the tenderest feelings. "He is only a channel, but he doesn't know it," she reasoned. "And I must help him by loving him. And I do, I do! And he will reflect it in loving and helping me."

Still did Penberry return afresh to the fray. "I'm getting old," he began one day, taking a now familiar tack, "past eighty now."

"That's splendid!" the girl exclaimed; "for you have now reached the age at which Moses began his life-work. What a wonderful coincidence, that you and he should begin at the very same age!"

"My life-work?" he cried, gaping. "Why, young woman, I began *that* sixty-odd years ago!"

"Oh," she gave back quickly, "you began to accumulate money then; but you wouldn't want me to think *that* your life-work, would you?" And, sooth to say, he did not—though before she came into his life he had been inordinately proud thus to regard it.

The working out of her present position had now become to Marian a problem. "It is the mesmerism of inertia that is using him," she reflected. "And I cannot afford to give it power. But neither must I try to force the demonstration of its powerlessness." And as she dwelt upon it, her thought turned to her part in Alden's enlistment, and she shook her head. "If I must remain here for a time, then it can only be by Principle, and for some good. Right is *bound* to be manifested. Aside from that of Principle, there is no other activity."

And again, when the old man had seemed unusually stubborn: "I refuse to see it. Our life is what we are conscious of," she said to herself resolutely when he had left her. "But consciousness is the activity of thought. Then the quality of my consciousness depends on what I think. And I can surely control that, and so be conscious only of good." For the girl knew that human life, so-called, was but a connected series of states of consciousness, and that these were but the externalization of her thought-activity. Thought based on Principle only must result in consciousness of naught but harmony; and *vice versa.* Was it to become conscious of her own and Alden's freedom and safety that she was now striving so hard? Then she must know that the Sons of God are ever free, and know that such right thinking *must* become externalized in the harmony she sought to bring forth.

But by now Simeon Penberry too was thinking, and along lines that were new to him. And while the girl stood squarely with her Principle, and knew that there was "nothing hid that shall not be revealed," Simeon Penberry was actively revolving in his mind the forces that had driven the girl from Crestelridge and turned upon her the frown of society. Particularly did the thought of Doctor Roake's varied activities impress him. In a subsequent talk with Marian he asked, quite irrelevantly —for of late he had enjoyed drawing out her ideas in regard to the conduct of the war, and had been astonished at her views—"What will happen now? At the beginning of this

year we couldn't have foreseen the downfall of Russia—but it is fast coming. Things are not going well. Where now can we strike a quick, decisive body blow against the enemy?"

"In Palestine," she said, and so quickly that it startled him.

He laughed cynically. "We've made two attempts to blow the Turks out of Gaza," he answered, "but they're too much for us. And Murray is about the best we have."

"Then," she quietly returned, "the right leader is being prepared now. And he will appear at the right time."

And after that Simeon Penberry went to the councils of war—for he stood high among Britain's leaders, and his advice was eagerly sought—with the girl's words echoing in his mind. But why, he had asked her, did she counsel a Palestine drive? And quite unintentionally he had asked if it might be because Doctor Roake had so heartily poo-poohed the idea. "And if he is opposed to it," reflected Penberry, "he has a damnably good reason—or the girl has misjudged the man."

But who was Doctor Roake? What purpose could he be subserving in distant Crestelridge? And why should this girl suspect the doctor of activity in the attempt to dismember the British Empire? Again Penberry plied Marian with his searching questions; again cabled messages sped between the Old World and the New. Then he came back to the girl once more. "I have twenty gold mines on the Rand," he said, watching her narrowly. "I'm going to sell 'em all. You can spend the money, if you wish."

"Very well," she answered calmly. "I will fit out an ambulance corps and go with it to Palestine."

His mouth opened, and his eyes bulged. "I say! . . ." he began. Then he regained his composure. "But why Palestine? Always Palestine! France needs ambulance corps; so does Italy. . . I say, does it occur to you that you are going to Palestine for any reason?"

She sat for a while with downcast eyes. Then she looked up at him. "I don't know," she said slowly. "I . . . don't know. But . . . I think of it so often . . . so often."

"Well, why do you say that Palestine is the place now for a sharp, telling blow at the enemy?"

"Because the literal 'treading down of the Gentiles' is about to cease," she answered. "The blow that will drive the oppressor from Jerusalem cannot help falling, for the spiritual fact must be externalized. The soldiers of Ephraim are the arm that will drive him out."

"Soldiers of Ephraim! I say, the husky British will do the driving. . ."

"They are Ephraim; they are the ten-tribed kingdom of Israel."

He drew a chair close to her and sat down. "You are a strange girl," he said, looking searchingly into her face; "you are, in a way, unearthly. What is this nonsense . . . or is it wisdom? What is this ten-tribed kingdom you are talking about?"

"It is the Anglo-Saxons," she answered simply. "You don't know your Bible, for if you did, you would know that the story of the twelve tribes of Israel runs through it from Genesis to Revelation. You would know that the very things going on in the world to-day were predicted by the prophet Daniel—even the dates may be known by those who understand his prophecy. Why, the Bible is the very history of the Anglo-Saxons! They were called Israel at first. Then ten of the tribes were taken captive into Assyria; they became lost. To-day we can trace their wanderings; we can see how, all through history, they were the keepers of the literal Word; they were always leaders in the struggles for human rights and liberty of conscience, and nation after nation tried to destroy them. To-day they stand revealed as Ephraim and Manasseh: Britain and America; to-day they are still fighting the descendants of the ancient Assyrians and Canaanites, to preserve the Word. And they are going into Jerusalem, literally and spiritually, in fulfillment of the 'times of the Gentiles,' spoken of by Jesus as one of the signs of the second coming of the Christ, and they will drive out the son of the bondwoman Hagar."

"I say!" he exclaimed; "would you make us all *Jews?*"

"No," she answered; "but we and the Jews are all Israelites, literally as well as spiritually. We are Hebrews, descendants of Heber, from whom came Abraham. Our Anglo-Saxon customs, Britain's ancient law of primogeniture that she still clings to, her weights and measures, all came from ancient Israel. Moses gave us the foundations of our Anglo-Saxon law, and it was moral. He told the Israelites that if they turned from the true God to worship false gods they would be punished 'seven times'. The number seven was a favorite with the ancient Hebrews. It meant something complete. So error was to be *completely* punished. That means destroyed in human consciousness. Moses said that at the end of the 'seven times' a remnant of God's people would return to the Promised Land. Well, after all, it is only the spiritual interpretation of prophecy that is real. And . . ." She became thoughtful again. "But," she continued, "a remnant *has* returned to the Christianity that Jesus taught."

"Never mind the spiritual," Penberry put in. "I can see hard material facts better. What is this 'seven times'? I'm deuced interested."

"A year to the Hebrews was 360 days," the girl explained; "a time was 360 of these years. So 'seven times' would be 2,520 years. The prophecy, according to Daniel, dates from the Captivity era, a period of 160 years and including many dates. But reckoned from the year that Nebuchadnezzar ascended the throne—and he is the type of the insane human mind, so his reign is the reign of error and he is the type of the persecutor of the Word—it points to 1917 as the year when the 'treading down of Jerusalem' shall cease literally."

Penberry sat silent for some moments. Then he murmured: "Strange stuff! Strange stuff!" He lapsed into silence again. Then he looked up at the girl. "You mean, then, that this year, 1917, will see the Millennium, the end of all evil, or error, as you term it?"

She shook her head. "You cannot really put an end to something that does not exist. The end of error will come when men cease to believe in it. It could come to-day. It is an individual experience for each mortal consciousness. But the Hebrews laid down so many laws upon themselves with their favorite number seven! And so in human history many of their prophecies seem to find literal fulfillment in certain dates or periods, as measured by these 'seven times'. And one of these is that literal Jerusalem shall be delivered 'seven times' from the era of the insane Nebuchadnezzar."

As the days went by the old man's bantering ceased and his interest in the girl's words became more sincere. "You believe that, with Turkey beaten, Bulgaria and Austria must submit, and Germany will have to acknowledge the inevitable? Perhaps so, perhaps so. But . . . Damme! Palestine is a *desert!*"

"There are the Arabs," she reminded him. "They are seeking their freedom too."

"The die is in the balance: Hussein is the Holy Master of the Moslems. The *jehad* might be declared over night!"

"But the Arabs are seeking nationality and self-determination. Britain can give it to them. I have heard Doctor Roake speak of this. He does not expect Britain to carry out the agreement of 1915."

"He expects the *jehad?*"

"He has lived in Egypt. He knows the Arabs. But Hussein's son has shown himself the friend of Britain, has he not? Is he not offering you a magnificent opportunity?"

"But . . . we must consider the sentiment of our Latin allies against the preferment of this Anglophile. . ."

"The future of the world is in the hands of the English-speaking people," she answered him. . .

And then Simeon Penberry began to approach the girl in

an attitude of reverent respect that at times bordered on awe. "She's unearthly!" he would mutter, after listening to her. "She's uncanny! But . . . Damme! she's right about Palestine! She's right!"

Thereafter it was noted that Simeon Penberry became increasingly active about the War Office. And soon it was bruited about that an immediate and aggressive resumption of the Palestine campaign had become the old man's obsession. He was talking it the length and breadth of London, from keep to garret of Westminster, and all but bellowing it from the housetops. His eighty years appeared to fall from him like an unused robe, and he became a youth, fired with crusading zeal, a modern Peter the Hermit. "I'll argue this matter," he vehemently declared, "until they launch the campaign just to shut me up!" Russia was fast withdrawing as a belligerent; large bodies of Turkish troops were streaming from the Caucasus toward the Holy Land; the redoubtable von Falkenhayn was in Constantinople with plans perfected for the recapture of Bagdad. "The girl is right!" Penberry stormed, as he stamped about, "and the War Cabinet will have to see it! I'll beat it into 'em with my cane, by heaven! with my cane. She's right! it will be the beginning of the end!"

Then, when his stock of arguments was exhausted, he would return to Marian for more. "Fill me full of 'em!" he would cry. "Give me ammunition! I've got to blow these pig-headed conservatives clean out of the trenches! They say we'd fail because we couldn't get water into Palestine for our troops! What?"

"Oh," the girl exclaimed, "the human mind lays down so many laws upon itself! It decrees that if we see the new moon over our left shoulder ill luck will follow. And ill luck will doubtless follow, just because of that human law of ignorance, unless we possess sufficient understanding to break it or know its nothingness. For as we think, so are we. We sentence ourselves with our thought."

She paused. Then a light came into her eyes. "There is an ancient prophecy," she said, looking up at him, "that Palestine will be delivered from the Turks when the waters of Egypt shall flow into it."

"Eh? Well?"

"Well, why not pipe water from the Nile. . ."

"Damme!" And he stayed not for more, but sped from her presence to Westminster. "She's right!" he muttered with what breath he could spare. "America surely *is* with us. . . But this Palestine affair is *our* game, ours alone!"

Had the master of Penberry Hall paused to analyze the

motives actuating him he must have found them confusingly complex. That Marian's coming to him was not fortuitous, he was now well aware; but of Madam Galuth and her possible motivation he knew nothing. Nor did he manifest any interest in either the woman or her motives, beyond a few casual queries. The cabled reports which he received from Crestelridge—all communications of the most confidential nature from the town's chief executive—conveyed the information that Madam Galuth was an eccentric character, who was believed to have traveled much, and who, doubtless after a life of worldliness, had retired to Crestelridge for reasons known only to herself—"possibly to do penance," Penberry had added, with a chuckle. As for the rector, Penberry would himself settle the score with him! Meantime, he made certain that the Whittiers should not learn of Marian's visit to Penberry Hall, and stipulated that the girl should send no communications back to Crestelridge.

As for the girl, he was not willing to admit that he was yielding to her, but rather to motives aroused by certain dormant memories which she had powerfully stimulated. The old bantering spirit continued to return at greater intervals, when he would again assume an attitude of obstinacy that made the girl endless work. "I know Maude, I know Murray," he would say, standing before her with shoulders humped and hands jammed into his trousers' pockets; "Murray led the British up to Gaza, but now Allenby's going to lead them to Jerusalem. Oh, to be sure, I can get you to Palestine. . . But I intend to keep you here."

Time, space, fear, inertia, all rose before the girl like obstacles insuperable, and above them grinned the defiant face of this eccentric old man.

"But Right *must* be manifested!" she insisted. "I must, I *shall*, go forward! It is God's command, and I can not be kept from obeying! But I cannot force the demonstration; I cannot let haste use me; I must keep step with God!" She knew that her obedience had already been yielded, and that the externalization must follow—else were her God a mockery, a hollow delusion. In her spare moments she read to the convalescent soldiers, talked with them, wrote their letters, taught French to those who would return to Flanders; and always she sought to keep her own thought clear, and to act a knowledge of God's immanence that her situation appeared directly to negative. "I must act as possessing all power from Him," she would repeat over and over, "else the fact that Alden and I are free will not be externalized!"

"You can't go as a nurse," Penberry informed her one day.

"Why, the Red Cross, the Military Nursing Reserve, all of 'em, have about 30,000 nurses on their lists, a nurse to a soldier, eh? And there's more red tape to unwind! Forms to fill up; statements as to whether there is insanity in your family; what your great-grandmother died of; your pedigree from Adam down. . . You've got to decide to stay here with me."

"That is selfishness," she answered. "And selfishness is suicide. If I can't go as a nurse, then you can fit out an ambulance corps—the Penberry Ambulance Corps—and send me with it. I can drive a car."

"Ha! But supposing I hadn't accumulated money, eh? How could I fit out an ambulance corps?" he demanded with a grin. "My life-work, you know."

"Then I would have to get the money from another source. You are one channel, but only one. If it is right, then I shall get the money somewhere, for Right is the cause, not you nor any other human being."

Then he came to her on another day with a glint in his eyes that made her spring from her chair. "I've been looking over the British enlistments from America," he said. "Ever hear of a fellow named David Barach, from Crestelridge? He's with our troops down on the Suez Canal. Good soldier; been promoted to sergeant."

Marian stared at him incredulously. David Barach! He was a Jew, an American! What could have induced *him* to enlist in the British army? She had known nothing of this! . . .

Of a sudden her thought became tumultuous—though why Barach's enlistment should have stirred it so deeply, she could not say. Again fear seemed to swoop down upon her with a roar. "You know where Alden Cragg is!" she cried. "You have known for a long time! Oh!"

Then she controlled herself. And she went to him and put her hands up to his shoulders. The old man fell back, refusing to look into her eyes. "I love you," she said brokenly, "I love you. And I know you love me, no matter what you may seem to do." And she laid her head against his breast and wept softly. Nothing more; but he cursed himself inwardly, he cursed young Cragg, he struggled with himself, he inveighed against Fate. . .

"But even if I knew I wouldn't let you go to him!" he cried savagely. "Your work is *here!* You came to enter the British service."

Then, as she remained quiet, his arms slowly closed around her slender form and his head dropped. He knew he was defeated. "He is . . . in Russia," he murmured. And tears rolled down his florid cheeks.

But he would not yield, and for days after that he avoided the girl, though again and again he strode to the door of her chamber, only to halt at the threshold, and with bowed head turn away. "Is it for herself?" he questioned. "Does she want to save this cad for herself? *This* rare girl?" But he knew it was not so, for she had told him—had repeated it—that "we are never saved for ourselves alone. God, who is infinite in His activities, never permits us to so limit ourselves. Our labors must benefit all. That which urged me here seemed to be a human life, yet I could not be permitted to save that life alone—oh, no! Nor could the saving of that life be in itself the end. But if by saving it the world shall be benefited, then I shall be permitted to go to him, and he shall be saved." If Penberry would not yield to her, neither would she give way before the error that seemed to be driving upon her through him.

But now it became apparent that a new train of thought had been started in the old man's mind. "It is the way *she* used to talk," he muttered, reflecting on the girl's words in regard to Jerusalem. And as he thought, he ground his teeth, and a hard look came into his eyes.

Again, this softened, and his eyes grew moist. "Always talking about the Bible and God," he murmured. "Just like *her* . . . just like her! And I . . . I threw her away! But, by heaven! she's come back in this girl, after fifty years, she has! And this time she stays!"

When his moral courage again permitted him to seek Marian, Penberry found her with a map of Egypt in her lap. He stopped before her, wondering. She looked up at him; and as he stared into her face his eyes widened and his mouth opened. "Have you ever been there?" he asked, almost in a whisper, and pointing a shaking finger at the map.

"We have all been there," she replied gently. "We have all been called out of the darkness of Egypt into the light. But evil is trying to force us back into the darkness again. Only the Word can save us. It means freedom. And the Anglo-Saxons are guarding the Word. The destinies of the human race are again to-day staked on the same cast with the freedom of the English."

The old man appeared strangely moved. His eyes remained glued to the map. "Egypt means . . . everything . . . to me," he said in a quavering voice, and seemingly absorbed. "*She* came from there."

The deep catch in his voice caused the girl to look up at him quickly. Then she rose and went to him. His hand went out and rested on her shoulder, and he stood with bowed head. "She was so far beyond me . . . she was like *you*."

He was yielding, slowly, but inevitably yielding. Marian knew it, knew now that her hour was at hand. "We lived in Cairo," he resumed. "She used to sit in the shadow of the Great Pyramid and study and ponder and write. That old tomb fascinated her; I could see nothing to it, and I made her stop babbling about it. I was busy getting concessions from the Government and exploiting the poor natives for gold. Her thought . . . I see it now! . . . was like yours. Mine was of the dust."

He paused. A tremor ran through his great frame, and tears coursed down his cheeks. Marian drew closer to him. His arms crept about her. "Marian," he said brokenly, "I loved her . . . but the world mesmerized me. You are like her as she was then. Stay with me, Marian, stay with me! All that I have shall be yours, all yours!"

She raised her head. "You are ready to tell me now," she whispered, "where he is and how I can go to him."

"I cannot let you go!" he cried. "I . . ." He looked down into her eyes. "If I knew that you would come back to me . . ."

"If it is right, I shall come back to you," she said gently.

He shook his head. "I threw *her* away," he murmured haltingly, "but, God help me! I am *giving* you. And I don't know why . . . I don't know why . . . but it is not to that cad, that . . ." Again he hesitated. Then he pulled himself up, as if by a mighty effort. "Alden Cragg," he said, "has been with the British troops in Salonika."

Marian gave a little cry and fell back.

"He is now on his way to Palestine," the old man finished.

CHAPTER 4

THE great *Ghor* through which the Jordan flows extends beyond the Dead Sea, like a huge fissure, to the Gulf of Akabah. Walled on the west by the peninsula of Sinai, and on the east by the sterile hills which terminate the Syrian Desert, it forms a trough, in which the torrid heat, narrowly confined and reflected from naked rocks and incandescent sands, becomes overpowering. The acrid dust of centuries lies baking on its worn thoroughfare, until stirred by foot of man or beast, when it rises slowly in massive clouds and hangs in air with the impenetrability of a dense fog.

On a suffocating October afternoon in the third year of the great war among the Christians this trough lay filled with clouds of alkaline dust, completely obliterating a long, strag-

gling line of British soldiers that wound slowly through it toward the north. Above, in the distance, hung German planes, like brooding vultures, striving vainly to pierce the dust below. Here and there dust-covered cars ploughed through the line, laden with officers white with the hot saline powder that enveloped them so completely that those on the rear seats frequently could not see the windshields ahead.

"Hi s'y, Batman, Hi'm thinkin' a month's leave 'n 'ell 'd do me good."

The man addressed did not reply or move his head. A moment later his shuffling feet slid into a dust-filled crevice in the hidden road and he sank to his knees. A hand fell heavily upon his shoulder and pulled him roughly back. "Keep y'r peepers on th' road, Batman! This ain't Lunnon; hit's th' Owly Land!"

Alden Cragg, dirty, unshaven, cocooned in dust, got slowly to his feet, straightened up painfully, shifted his heavy equipment from the galled spot on his shoulder, and resumed his former labored gait through the burning, suffocating heat. His companion watched him until he had gotten under way, then gave a contemptuous shrug of his shoulders and fell in behind him, singing softly as he struggled along:

"After *la guerre est fin-ee,*
Hi s'y, w'en *la guerre est fin-ee,*
Hit's back to owld Blighty
To wear a real nightie,
An' sleep 'n a gen-you-wine *lit!*"

It was the unquenchable spirit that had carried on until Akabah had fallen, until the British forces had pushed up the Jordan valley, through stifling heat, drenching rains, dust, fog, cold, short rations, disease, to the strong enemy line stretching from Gaza to ancient Beersheba; it was the undamped spirit that would still push on until the progeny of Esau should be driven from the land forever sanctified by the carpenter-metaphysician of Nazareth.

From that drizzling night of awful memory when the stunned youth had been wrenched from his swooning mother, down to this stifling day when, wretched, exhausted, benumbed, hopeless, he found himself plodding northward to join Allenby's troopers, Alden Cragg's life had been one of increasing horror. On the long sea voyage his fears grew hourly. A dreadful prescience of impending calamity appeared in the person of David Barach, who, from the first, hovered around him like a fell wraith. Did Cragg as much as glance up, there stood the Jew, silently staring at him; did he look across the board at

mess, his eyes met the hollow orbs of the Jew; did he turn a corner of the deck, the despised Jew confronted him. Never a word was exchanged, never a syllable uttered, but always those encircled eyes met his, and with a touch that seared like hot iron. What did it mean? What did it portend? Was this creature again asserting his pretense of equality with the Craggs? It must be more. Could it be . . . Heavens, no! The Craggs had merely shown him his place . . . had but properly punished him for his insolence! Yet now Cragg's nerves drew taut; he would spring to his feet at the slightest sound; a touch on the shoulder would convulse him. Sleep and appetite fled. He was at length confined to his bunk. And then it was David Barach who sat beside him, day and night, motionless, speechless, and always staring, until to the tortured Cragg the Jew's head became a whitened skull, grinning, eyeless, horrible. . .

When the ship docked, Cragg was borne to a hospital. Barach was obliged to proceed with his unit. Then, slowly, freed from the haunting specter, Cragg returned to himself, but remained in such uncertain physical condition that he was left behind when his regiment crossed to France to enter upon their preliminary training.

In this separation from his own unit Cragg hoped he saw a delay sufficient to save him, and his spirits greatly rose. But the hope met sad fracas. Though exempted from immediate service in arms, an indignity was shortly inflicted upon him only slightly less torturing than the horrible omnipresence of the Jew: he was assigned as personal orderly to Captain Fitley, of the Intelligence Service. He, a *Cragg!* How his cheeks flushed with hot indignation. He, a *slave!* He furiously resented the indignity, and he so informed the captain. But Fitley, tall, lean, sad of features, was one of those patient students of human nature who have learned the rare art of regarding a situation or circumstance impersonally. He took Cragg aside and talked to him as he were a son. He showed a tender regard for the youth. He would have made more of a companion of him than a lackey, had Cragg's pride permitted it. But the youth's angry resentment waxed hourly stronger. He refused to see that the great-hearted captain stood between him and worse indignities, unspeakable hardships, possible death; had saved him from the torturing presence of the haunting Jew. . .

"You are making an awful blunder, my boy," the captain said. "I know of your family. Your father and mine had business dealings. That's why I've taken you under my wing. I know what it means to you to give up all you had and get into the ranks. But let me tell you something: most of what

we consider to be our worst afflictions are in reality our greatest opportunities. You've been given a chance. Don't blow it."

But Cragg held the doors of his mind closed; and the shadows within grew thereby heavier. He would associate with no one voluntarily. He closed his eyes against the wounded, the convalescent, the disabled whom he could not avoid meeting. He kept rigidly aloof from the hospitals, the canteens, the reading-rooms. So great was his sense of shame, of wounded pride, that he refrained from visiting his barristers in London; he avoided his clubs, his friends. In camp and barracks he strove constantly not to hear tales of hardship or adventure, of suffering or death, from soldiers returned from the front. In a great measure his position as orderly to Captain Fitley saved him from much of this; and from much, too, at the hands of the men, who quickly appraised him and spat disgustedly whenever his name was mentioned. His one obsessing thought was that the war must end soon, owing to America's entry, and then he would be freed from the galling necessity to yield obedience to insolent officers, many of whom had doubtless been chauffeurs, tradespeople, men of lowly station, far, far below the Cragg level. . . Ah, then he would be lifted out of an experience which he must ever after regard as an ineradicable disgrace.

But not so had it been ordained for Alden Cragg. His tutelage, long delayed, had now begun. Within a fortnight of his arrival in England he was ordered to prepare the captain's effects for a journey to the Salonika front.

"But, Captain," he protested aghast, "the war will be over before we've been there a week!"

The tolerant captain smiled—and had Cragg been less absorbed in himself he might have seen the deep sadness in that smile. "For me, perhaps," the captain answered gently, and then fell silent. He did not say that his orders would send him and his orderly into Trans-Caucasia, from which region the vaguest of reports were issuing, yet where, it was known, the Russian troops were throwing down their arms and hurrying north under the deadly mesmerism of the Bolshevist.

The journey was compassed without special hardship or inconvenience, and even with some interest, and Cragg was about to lift his head once more and gaze with his wonted supercilious air upon the crude clay surrounding him, when the doubly-distilled horrors of Tiflis and Erivan fell upon his soul like a smothering flood. Then did the significance of the captain's words come swiftly home to him. Then did he learn that the captain had been in that scourged region only a few months before, and that the awful experience had riven his soul.

"But," Cragg almost screamed, "I didn't know there were such things! Oh, my God! you shouldn't have brought me here . . . without preparation!"

But earth had no language in which to have adequately conveyed to him the picture. Nor could aught have prepared a mentality such as Alden Cragg's for the aftermath of the Turkish "Bloody Trek". "Perhaps—if you don't go insane—it will do you good to learn that your personal troubles are not the greatest in the world," the captain said. And then, because duty commanded, he led Cragg out to where Death stalked in its most hideous garb.

Could King Tirdates, first of earth's monarchs to embrace Christianity, have looked down the corridors of time—oh, could he have seen, at the close of sixteen centuries of barbarous persecution, the pitiful throngs that swayed as they stood and stretched forth mummified hands to the horrified Cragg—could he have heard their low whines, their whimpering *"O-na-ne! O-na-ne!"*—could he have witnessed their fearful agony of body and soul—he would indeed have hesitated before embracing the Christian religion and imposing it upon his people! Could he have foreseen the hideous blotting out of a million lives at devilish Moslem hands in these latter days of the "seven times," he would have despatched his fleetest messengers to Constantine with a warning loud to hold aloof from the blighting faith of the Christians. . .

"Starving," murmured the captain, tears bursting from his straining eyes. Cragg heard it, as he stood frozen with horror before the ghastly sight. Lamentation hung upon the chill air, low, broken, inarticulate lamentation—aye, for the sins of the Christians, of the Craggs, of the Chaddocks, the Whittiers, laid upon these.

"But we *all* caused the war!" Marian had said that Sunday at the rector's bountiful board. . .

"O-na-ne! O-na-ne!"

Cragg tore the food from his pack and threw it to the wretches. The captain seized his arm. "For God's sake don't do that!" he cried. But the ravening hordes had fallen upon it. They fought like wolves, snarling, clawing, gouging. An emaciated wretch, grinning as he had grinned with the set and uncontrollable leer of death for weeks, thrust a piece of the bread into his mouth, gulped it, fell writhing when it touched his stomach, and died at Cragg's feet.

Cragg shrieked aloud. It was a hideous nightmare! It was unreal! He turned to flee; but the captain caught his arm. And then the captain laughed, a hollow, mocking laugh. And after that he laughed constantly. And the more unspeakable

the horrors, the louder he laughed. But while he laughed his eyes burned, and he talked ever more wildly, and his talk became hectic. Then the stupefied Cragg began to understand what the captain had meant by saying that the war would soon be over for him. . .

"I can't stand it! I can't! *I can't!*" Cragg shrieked. But he would; for one whose thought, like his, centers ever upon himself, is in a measure protected from externals. It was those like the captain, who loved their fellow men, that sank with bursting hearts before such indescribable misery.

"Nine hundred thousand have perished by massacre, starvation, and exposure," the British Commander reported with shaking voice. "A quarter of a million girls are imprisoned in Turkish harems, with their faces branded so as to make escape impossible. There are at least sixty thousand orphans held by the Turks. But," and his voice fell, "there are *no* infants. None have lived through these last four years. The *Ittihat Terraki* has blotted out a million lives."

And the *Ittihat Terraki*—alas, the irony of it!—was the Turkish "Committee of Union and Progress".

Daily the wild-eyed, grinning, death-stricken throngs milled slowly about before Cragg's bursting eyes, going nowhere, but milling, milling, milling, starving, rotting, shelterless, friendless, Godless, till death shrieked in their ears and snuffed them out. Whimpering, sobbing, filthy, tatterdemalion, unhuman herds, all victims of the great mesmerism. . .

Daily the fickle Russian soldiers gave over the land; daily the hate-filled descendants of the Assyrian drew closer to Batum; daily the fanatical sons of Esau pressed from the south. "It's our move next," the commander said grimly. "God!—to leave these people to the mercies of the Huns and the Turks. . . See that fellow over there?" pointing to a dull-eyed creature huddled in his rotting rags against the building in the sunlight. "I hope he dies before we leave. He came from the slaughter-house of Der-el-Zor. Escaped the Turkish massacre. He's mad. Hears nothing all day long but the shrieks of his people as they went down under the Turkish swords. His own family were soaked in oil and burned alive. He escaped through the Euphrates river—oh, no, he didn't swim it! God, no! It was jammed with human bodies, and he climbed over them! He had to push the bodies aside to get water to drink! He fled into the desert, and found bodies, bodies, corpses, pyramids of human heads and bodies, everywhere. Christians, you know. This war—perhaps you don't know it—has been from the first a war to exterminate Christianity. But there haven't been many that realized it. The Kaiser, you

know, is the Defender of Islam. He supports the Koran, that horrible jumble of a fanatic's diseased brain that licenses murder *'in the name of the merciful and compassionate God, who created man from congealed blood'*. Man created from congealed blood! Get that? There's a doctrine worthy of the noble War Lord! Do you wonder that everything evil has struck through him to wipe out Christianity? As for what Christianity really is . . . God knows! That's another matter. But I know what it *isn't*. And it isn't what the preachers have been giving us, and I jolly well know that!"

Terror seized upon Cragg; he became a cowering, shrinking, abject figure. True, he had always suffered acutely from fear; but never until now had he realized how terribly afraid of death he was. In its presence his blood froze, his cowering spirit palzied. He had been able to control his thought of it while Crestelridge was acclaiming him a hero; but here, in this ghastly spot, with horror drenching him, his soul quaked.

He got out his Bible—the one which his doting mother had ordered specially bound for him, resplendent in morocco and gold, with his name embossed large in the yellow metal across its cover. But the complaisancy with which he had been wont to read and expound the Scripture in former days had forsaken him. To the increasing of his terror he found that the Bible had no message for him now. Worse, it mocked him! It had served him well when idling in the lap of physical comfort in beautiful "Craggmont"; but here, where revolting Death leered at him from its eyeless sockets, picked at him with its ghastly hands, here . . . he let fall his Bible and cried aloud, cried madly: "Oh, my God!"

But would God let him die, *him*, a Cragg? And where now was his god? Why, at "Craggmont," of course, in the banks and vaults where lay the Cragg stocks and bonds, their deeds, their gold. . .

Yet the rector had taught—ah, yes, the rector had taught such soothing, narcotizing views of heaven and hell, such splendid ideals of socialization, of organization to perpetuate things material. And Cragg had listened and believed that naught but the things of matter counted, that the material constituted the sum and substance of all that was real and worth one's while, that it was the essence of the good things of this world. . . But these supports were now failing him, miserably, treacherously! He was floating over a bottomless abyss, floating with seared brain, with frozen soul, floating. . .

He fell upon his knees and prayed, long and feverishly, to the God he had never known. But his own words mocked him; they echoed in his ears like demoniac laughter. His bursting

brain dinned with the refrain: "If I regard iniquity in my heart the Lord will not hear me." Did he regard iniquity in his heart? He justly hated the girl who had hurled him into this hell; he rightfully hated that haunting Jew; he loved the fair, bright world of "Craggmont" and all that it stood for; he loved the Cragg prestige; he loved the pomp and ritual of proud St. Jude's, comprising all that he knew of the worship of God. He had been a faithful communicant, had fostered God's work in St. Jude's—and yet, withal, God had forsaken him!

He rose, fiercely cursing the God that could not see and pity such human distress as his. He loudly, felly cursed St. Jude's, the rector, Marian; he hurled anathemas at the Christ. . .

And always beneath his window huddled the ghastly Dantean crew of hell-sentenced wretches that fought for the worms and beetles they dug from the dead soil; the joyless, broken, maddened throng that milled and milled the slow hours through, whining, sobbing, moaning; the crazed, unhuman things that sat with glassy stares, waiting, dull-eyed, dry-lipped, for oblivion. The nations had bartered Christ for a mess of pottage, and these were paying. . .

Then his brain tottered. His senses numbed. And from thenceforth he moved as in an extended dream. And slowly he became aware that his captain had died, a maniac; that he, Cragg, had helped to bury him, and had laughed shrilly and tried to dance on his grave; that the British had evacuated Trans-Caucasia; and that from somewhere, from somebody in the world of sweet reality far beyond this nightmare of hell, word had come that had thrust him into the ranks and sent him, he knew not whither until his veiled mind began to clear on the burning, dust-choked road from Akabah.

CHAPTER 5

IN the official report of the Turkish attempt to frustrate the concentration of British troops around Beersheba in October of 1917 there was little of more than casual interest. Few read it, beyond those dull-witted clerks in the War Office, who yawned as they transcribed it upon the records. Yet it was a spirited action against the British outpost line that had been pushed to a ridge of low hills near the Wadi Hanafish, and had it succeeded, might have halted the work of concentration. Two desperate charges left the commanding hill in Turkish hands. Then the gallant action of the Australian Light Horse, reinforced by two brigades of the 53rd Division, caused the Turk

eventually to withdraw and to abandon further thought of interference at that point. Bare and monotonous details these, yet fraught with deepest moment to those three whom Crestelridge had so oddly contributed to the war of the Christians: the unevangelical Marian, the ritualist Cragg, and Barach the Jew.

But for the powerful influence of Simeon Penberry, Marian Whittier nor Alden Cragg had had part in this affair. And it was later said that, but for the same powerful influence, the Palestine campaign as a whole might have assumed a less significant aspect. Penberry, who had earlier ridiculed the idea, had quite unexpectedly become an aggressive supporter of the campaign, and loud in his choice of the man to conduct it. But how largely he reflected the thought of Marian Whittier, not even he himself would have been willing to admit. To the last he vowed that he had yielded, not to the girl, but to his own superior judgment. "Why am I letting you go?" he declared. "I couldn't get you into Trans-Caucasia, but I can to Palestine, that's why." But what he did not tell the eager girl was that his investigations had disclosed the fact that Alden Cragg was going mad in Trans-Caucasia. And he had secured the order that had transferred him to the Palestine field. "Why, good Lord!" he cried, as he watched her hurried preparations for departure, "don't you suppose I've been in touch with affairs down there long since? Don't you suppose, young woman, that I've had my agents among the Arabs, the Egyptians, and even among the Turks? Why, I've got a spy in Jerusalem right now, under the very nose of the Hun! Ha! ha! Wisest old hag y' ever clapped eyes on! Uncanny! Br-r-r-r!"

Then, as he sat grumbling over note after note that went to the purchase of equipment for the Penberry Ambulance Corps, he would look up at Marian and demand: "What am *I* getting out of this? It's all sacrifice for me: but you're going to find your lover—the bally cad!"

And the girl would put her arms about him and remind him that the war was teaching them all the greatest lesson that mankind has to learn in earth's preparatory school, that of loving one's fellow men. "Everything else is so trivial now," she would say; "for now we—you, and I, and all those who are fighting for Principle—are banded together in the mightiest task ever given to man: that of constructing heaven upon earth. Oh, yes, it *is* possible; indeed, it is what we are commanded to do! Everything is now laid to the plummet, your interests, mine, the world's. We can no longer live unto ourselves; Alden will learn this lesson. . ."

Then she would pause, and stand lost in thought. She knew not if Cragg had seen fighting in Trans-Caucasia; but she

knew that he must in Palestine. And she knew that Barach was there. But she knew not why her thought became so disturbed whenever she reflected on Barach's presence near Alden, yet she felt at times that she must scream out over the petty delays that kept her from reaching this Jew and drawing from him his motive.

"Yet Isaiah tells us that 'he that believeth shall not make haste'. Not if the haste is born of fear, for fear is belief in other powers than the One God. Error counts upon haste as an accomplice in its work. Haste, born of fear, becomes panic, inefficiency, blundering. No, I must keep step with God."

As the time drew near for Marian's departure Penberry sought to hide his all too apparent feelings in facetiousness. "You'll have to make your will before you go," he suggested. "They all do."

Marian laughed. "I haven't a thing to will," she replied. "Not *my* will, but *Thine*, be done. There, I've made it."

Again: "Aren't you taking some tubes of morphia tablets, in case you fall into the hands of the Turks?" Penberry asked. "The nurses all do. They prefer suicide. . ." But Marian scoffed the suggestion back into silence.

And then the great iron gates to Penberry Hall opened, and Marian, like a released bird, flew out and sped into the far south. Simeon Penberry had held her a prisoner for three long months.

* * * * * * * *

In the shadow of the autumn sun cast by the Great Pyramid of Gizeh, on Egypt's northern border, a band of Arabs sat huddled against the wind that drove sharply from the south. In their midst stood a woman, dark of skin, black of hair, and with deep-set eyes that glowed like live coals.

"Shall the *jehad* be declared? you ask, O Abdul," she was saying in a voice tremulous with passion. "It is but suicide that you advocate! Again I say you, No! The green flag shall *not* be raised!"

"Then, O Zuleyka," answered the one addressed, "we are without hope."

"Hope? Our hope, O Abdul, has become a certainty! Look you there," extending her arm to the south and west, "where Pharaoh's ruined palace again appears. Think you Truth can remain forever buried within the things of matter? Who is it that now brings to light the throne of hoary Merenptah, of him who knew the Hebrew Moses? Who is it now unearths the home of ancient Akhnaton, that worthy heretic who yielded to the Hebrew faith, forsook his foul worship of bulls and cats and turned to the One God, Whom he described as 'Father and Mother of all that He had made', the 'Lord of Love'?

"Learn you nothing from all this, O Abdul? Know you not that the very elements of the Hebrew faith are found in the religion of this ancient Pharaoh, whose palace the British are recovering yonder from the sands of centuries? And that that faith alone is now our hope? Know you not that when, two years ago, the German Kaiser, boasting Defender of Islam, set forth to destroy the ancient faith, that nation of the Isles, which the One Almighty made the keeper of the Word, did throw its protecting arm about all Egypt and us—and, though girding itself to slay the Assyrian worshiper of Bel, did in the same hour send its peaceful mission here to bring up from yonder jealous sands the long-forgotten palace of the Pharaohs? O Abdul the Ignorant! A type are you of the blinded world."

She drew nearer the man, with extended arm and long finger pointing at him. "What is our hope?" she went on eagerly. "This: to recognize that Government to which the Hebrews' God has given the Word. For it, O Abdul, will sweep away, in time and with its perfected faith in the One God, every human form of government, and we and all mankind shall be governed by the One God alone! Has Egypt e'er known freedom? Yet it knows it now, in spite of those like you, tools still of old Assyria, who stand too near the sun to see its fullest glory. Turn you, O Abdul," she went on, pointing upward at the pyramid, "the Hebrews' altar to their God still stands in this mighty pile that laughs at time! The secret of old Khufu's tomb still mocks the silly wisdom of Sultan, Kaiser, Warrior, Priest!

"Listen further, O ye blinded ones!" She turned and drew herself up to her full height before them all. "The hidden powers of darkness loosed this wicked war, and why? To crush out Truth! And these dark powers, by flattery, coaxing, wheedlings, gold, would darken your thought, too, and draw you with them to the bottomless pit, down yonder long, steep incline in Mizraim's altar, urged by the evil Dragon star. But ye shall not yield! For—hear ye well!—the final year of the Hegira of the Hebrew Daniel's prophecy ends *this very month of October of this very year*, and that mighty prophecy is fulfilled, for this month has witnessed the British Allenby's drive launched fresh against the Prussianized Turks! Does it mean naught to you that Scriptural prophecy is fulfilled with such exactness? Mark you well: Jerusalem totters to its fall!

"But, more: this year of 1917 sees now a new power in the conflict—sees ancient Israel joined bone to bone and reunited! Their God is surely with them! The powers of darkness shall go down! Ishmael shall become a nation, but Esau shall perish! Then cast we not our lot with him!"

She stood for a moment, looking out beyond the group into the vast desert. At length her eyes wandered back to the pyramid. For some moments they roved over the vast pile, then hung at the ancient entrance that pierces the northward side.

"An arrow," she said slowly and in a low, awesome tone, "loosed from yonder downward passage of this ancient pile, and with the needful power, would drop within the walls of Salem, the Prince Melchisedec's city of Peace, the holy city of Jerusalem. Thither I go on the morrow, swift as the flying arrow. He who sends me there fulfills prophecy. The hour has struck. The Sphinx yields her secret! The *jehad* shall not be declared! Esau shall perish with his mess of pottage! Cast we not our lot with him!"

* * * * * * * *

"'Tain't so much wot she s'ys as th' w'y she looks hat 'un, Bill." The speaker scraped the mud from his trench spade and spat significantly.

"Right, John," the other returned, straightening up and mopping his wet brow. "But, Hi s'y, w'en she *does* speak, you feels like you're goin' up hin a lift, wot?"

"His she a female chaplain, Bill?" someone asked.

"Blimme! now she may be so."

"Y'r wrong, Bill," put in another; "she ain't got their dope. Th' chaplains s'ys: 'B'ys, we're goin' t' talk to ye 'bout religion . . . but we'll 'ave a movie pitcher first'. S'ys Hi: 'T'ell wi' th' movies! Let's 'ear 'bout religion. Stick t' y'r text!' Hi minds th' chap wot Hi last 'eard. 'E was t' talk f'r ten minnits, an' Hi was dam eager t' 'ear. We'd been singin' 'ims an' gettin' jolly well worked hup, an' a lad fr'm th' service 'ad prayed summat grand, an' we s'ys: 'Let th' preacher bring on a bracer now'. An' the preacher get hup an' . . . my Gawd! 'e spends th' whole ten minnits tellin' funny stories . . . an' we sittin' there t' 'ear summat gen-oo-ine 'bout death, an' Gawd, an' 'eaven! Some o' th' b'ys walked out on 'im, the' did!"

"Right! Th' b'ys don't want t' be told t' keep aw'y fr'm th' drink an' gamblin' an' wimmen; an' the' don't want movies an nursery stories f'm th' chaplains. Blimme! the' wants *religion*, Hi s'ys. . . An' the' wants hit wi'out th' cam-oo-flage. This gel gi's hit t' us dif'rent; she . . . Blimme! she s'ys as 'ow she loves us—us wots clods an' lubbers! . . . Hi couldn't get hit fust, but, blarst me! hit's soakin' hin now: she sees us dif'rent fr'm wot we be, an' that's wot Hi mikes out o' hit! Wot?"

"I notes she's pop'lar wi' all but th' chaplains. . ."

"An' w'y, Hi asks? Hi'll s'y hit's because she don't let us die w'en th' chaplains tells us hour time's come, wot? Do ye

mind young Jimmie Ayler, o' th' Sixtieth, an' 'ow she finds 'im all shot to 'ell, wi' th' dew o' death on 'is fore'ead, an' w'en th' priest asks 'im would 'e be pleased to confess an' throw 'isself on th' marcy o' th' Lord 'e rises hup mad as 'ell an' s'ys 'e ain't so dam yellow as to lead a wicked life an' then beg th' Lord like a bally windy f'r a seat hin Paradise w'en 'e sees 'is hour's come, eh? An' then this gel steps up an' tells 'im Gawd his 'is life, an' sech, an' pulls 'im through, an' now 'e's th' best man hin th' regiment an' worships 'er like a 'oun' dog, wot?"

" 'As she got some new-fangled religion, do ye think, John?"

" 'Tain't so much a new-fangled religion, Hi'm thinkin', as hit his th' old one that th' preachers 'as lost sight of," was the slowly enunciated verdict. And many heads around nodded in confirmation of the opinion.

Though without preparation, as the world would regard it, yet Marian Whittier went into the Palestine war zone equipped in a way that those about her saw not. Ostensibly, she was attached to the Penberry Ambulance Corps, whose active head was the efficient young Doctor Hollom, of London; in reality she came with a freedom of action such as only the vast Penberry influence could have procured her. And, though she did not then know it, that influence could have been enlisted only in the way Madam Galuth had obtained it.

Her entrance into Palestine, after weary days of hardship and delay, was not without accompanying emotions that surged powerfully within her; and yet she entered with a consecration, and a consequent concentration of thought, that in a measure prevented any vivid mental impress from the scenes being enacted around her. To her more spiritual mode of thought, she had entered Canaan, even as had Abraham of old. Like him, she would find her God there, despite the roars of evil. She was on the soil hallowed by those who long before had learned and taught the Allness of the One God, and who had, by that same scientific and demonstrable knowledge, worked out their complete salvation. The descendants of the ancient Assyrian, together with the sons of Esau, held the land; but so, to human sense, did a brood of errors hold human consciousness. The expulsion of this brood from the human mentality would externalize the entrance into the promised land of harmony. "War," she had sought to impress upon Penberry, "is a state of human mind externalized. We are not at war with *people*, but with the error that uses people. The trouble is not with others, but with ourselves. It is not that somebody else has failed, not that Christianity has failed, but that *we* have failed utterly to demonstrate Principle, God, and thus destroy the error that seeks to crush the Word."

Early she became known to the soldiers as "the girl with the queer notions"; yet sick, weary, disgruntled, wounded "Tommies" vied savagely for her ministrations, and vowed heartily that while she read or talked to them they forgot the hell of war. And the girl, as she looked tenderly, lovingly upon these begrimed and sweating creatures who were fighting back the hordes of chaos with material weapons, the only ones they had been taught to wield, would feel a great surge of pity for them, so foully betrayed by their spiritual guides and teachers, by those who, like Wilson Whittier, basely materialized religion and built huge fabrics of flimsy tinsel that consumed in the first hot breath of hate and murder that blew from the land of Franz Mesmer and seared the world. Clearly she had seen this material teaching as but a phase of the mesmerism which, from "the beginning," had constituted that "veil" still untaken away. She had seen suggestion as the chief molder of human opinion, the arch-enemy of civilization. She had seen a whole nation fall its abject prey, avidly absorbing the suggestion put forth by press, by pulpit, by school, until it lost its ability rightly to reason and became subject to any emotion—until it grew so morally dulled and enslaved that rapine and the impaling of babes upon bayonets would afford occasion for public celebration by parades and orations and tuneful bands in city squares. "Oh," she cried, "when the world is constructed anew, may I help the people to know *why* and *how* they have come to believe what they do believe!" For well she knew that the tool of suggestion knows not why he does a thing, why he has acquired the beliefs that he clings to so tenaciously, nor why he performs those actions that seem to him most deliberate, but that may destroy him utterly and his world. "It is because he is narcotized," she would say; "mesmerized; just mentally doped!"

Possibly it was only the aggressive suggestion of evil that drove Marian's thought to David Barach; possibly it was the angel of protection—she must determine at once. And again she used the Penberry influence, always at hand. "For I am here on David Barach's account just as much as on Alden's," she reasoned.

Then, in time, she found him. And the Jew's eyes grew big with wonder when they fell upon her; but they quickly narrowed and turned hard and cold. She greeted him cordially. He stared at her, then broke into a cynical laugh.

"So St. Jude's comes to the Holy Land!" he sneered. "The 'church of the cordial welcome'—to millionaires. Is your saintly father here, too? Bah! not he. He's safe in Crestelridge, juggling wafers and wine on Sundays, and preaching that there can't be a war, while we fellows are down here in

this hell-hole saving his life and the worthless lives of the other home-guard parasites who've sucked our blood and stolen our goods and murdered our wives! Well, what do you want of me?"

Marian heard him through pityingly. And when he had concluded, and stood looking defiantly into her face, a great longing possessed her to aid him, and all who have been similarly brutalized by human suffering. "I want to help you," she said gently.

He shrugged his shoulders and gave a snort of disgust. "Bosh! The brazen effrontery of you self-constituted agents of the Almighty is sickening! I suppose," he added, watching her narrowly, "you think I wouldn't dare talk to you this way if the war hadn't brought us all to the same level."

"But there really was no difference in level before," she answered. "Caste is only an unfounded belief in inequality. The only *real* equality is moral equality. Tell me your story, and let me help you. For your thought is heavily burdened, I can see."

"Ah! then you come as a missionary? A sort of mind-reader, I take it. You have read my thought? Pray, what do you find there?"

She hesitated before replying; then: "Death."

His mocking smile faded, and the lines of his face drew down. "Death!" he echoed. Then, eagerly, and with a note of fear in his voice: "For whom?"

She did not immediately answer; but as she stood regarding the man she saw his eyes burn and his facial muscles quiver with the suppression of a question that was smoldering beneath, and that she knew must burst through. She waited; and soon the question spouted forth.

"Tell me," said Barach, drawing closer to the girl and speaking in a low, tense voice, "what became of that craven, Alden Cragg? I left him in London. Did they ship him back to his mammy? Tell me!"

Somehow she knew it would be of Alden. . . "I thought I might find him here," she said.

"Ah! then he is coming?"

"Why are you so interested?"

He grinned—it was a devilish leer: "I want to see him under fire," he said.

Her eyes looked deep into his and held them, despite his efforts to shift his gaze. "Did you ever have any dealings with Alden Cragg?" she asked.

"Oh, yes," he replied readily. "Sounds odd, doesn't it, that a Cragg should stoop to traffic with a despised Jew? But

. . ." He came still closer and grinned down into her face. "Would you believe it?" he said, "but it had to do with a woman."

Marian started. "A woman!" she exclaimed.

He nodded. "My wife," watching her keenly for the effect of his words. Then, as she stood, utterly uncomprehending: "Cragg . . . *killed* her!"

The girl gasped at the words, then fell back before the deadly hatred that burst out after them. Barach's eyes flamed; his frame quivered; his head, with its shaggy mane of black hair, swayed back and forth on his long body like a serpent's; his words came spewing forth as venom. His mentality, submerged in a rising tide of hate, lost consciousness of his environment, of the girl's presence, of all but the festering wound that he believed the Craggs had dealt him. A torrent of vindictiveness, of invective, of unleashed fury, poured from him, and left him shriveled into the distorted incarnation of murder.

So had he raged under the lashing thought of the Craggs since that fell hour when they, as the instruments of black error, had wrested from him the hope of heaven with his earthly all. So had he hugged to his bosom the contorted concept of Cain until it had gnawed deep into his soul, until his brain burned incessantly, his hands forever twitched, his tongue hung caked and dry, and disease fastened like a leech upon his frame. Hopelessness held the scepter over his mind; ambition had shrunken into a foul, rotting desire to kill, and that must destroy him in its own fulfillment.

Yet Marian knew as she stood now before this hideous manifestation of carnal hatred that the man was, through it all, still seeking the Christ; knew that his raging animus was based only upon that "lie" which from the beginning has appeared to mortals to veil the truth. To her, the infinite Principle, God, was an omnipresent Love that left no room for its opposite, hate. She knew that David Barach really had no enemies but that same impotent "lie"; but she likewise knew that to the uninstructed mortal hugging to himself the concepts of false thinking the prophet Jeremiah's words would not fail of fulfillment: *"I will bring evil upon this people, even the fruit of their thoughts!"* . . .

Barach's fury spent itself, and left him weak; left him with anxious, wistful eyes staring in mute, hopeless, helpless appeal. Left the girl, too, with a full revelation of the devilish animus that was driving him. And before it she stood appalled.

Then he turned away, with bent head, while she stood struggling against the flood of suggestions that had swept over her. Above, against the blue vault, airplanes wheeled and droned.

The parched earth lay baking beneath the ardent sun. Long, wavering "dust-devils" sprang up from the ground like genii, hovered for a moment, and whirled off drunkenly across the desert. It was all a symbol of the sterile human consciousness that knows not God.

CHAPTER 6

ODDLY enough—at least to those inexperienced in mental suggestion and its modes—Cragg's waking thought on the Akabah road went not back to the horrors of Trans-Caucasia, but to David Barach, and he recalled with a start that, before leaving England, Captain Fitley had remarked that the unit with which Cragg and Barach had come was scheduled for training on French soil preliminary to service in Palestine. But Cragg was then the captain's orderly; and thereby he escaped this service, escaped the haunting persecution of the spectral Jew, and escaped, in less measure, association with those other mere human creatures who had shared his mess and huddled him about so unbelievably, so incomprehensibly, as if of equal caste with him, a Cragg!

But now, in this new shift on Fate's board, should he find the Jew up there? If so, could he face him again? For he did fear him; and it was a far deeper fear than that which had impelled him to rob the Jew of his wife and his goods; it was a fear that had terrified him into loathing hatred of the fellow; it was a negative emotion, that seemed to become positive, offensive, simulating aggressive moral courage, that might even accomplish the destruction of the offending Jew. It was a reflection of that national selfishness of the Hun which became transmuted into fear and hatred, and fell a victim to its own consuming error. . .

He would kill Barach! Was he not going forth to kill? Like these others, he was sent to slay to order; in prudence, he must inflict upon his fellows the death which he himself so greatly feared. But with those whose lives he was bidden to take he had no personal quarrel, against them no real ill-will. The war meant nothing positive to him—gladly would he fly from it and back to the soft embraces of Crestelridge. The tragic blunders of the rulers of this world could not in justice make him suffer and force him to inflict suffering upon those whom the State had named his enemies! . . .

And he could have avoided it all, but for Marian Whittier. Ah, his hate was vast enough generously to include this treach-

erous girl! . . . But he must kill Barach ere the Jew could again resume his persecutions! . . . How he loathed that girl! How he loathed the rector and his theological thaumaturgy! He hated Chaddock; he despised Ted Sayor. . . God! if he could but see them all riddled with shell! He cursed low. . .

The distant boom of guns smote his ears, and he stopped short. A thrill of terror suddenly pierced his soul. Then his startled imagination shot forward into battle, and he paled before its hideous possibilities. He was a coward! He knew it now!

His companion shoved him rudely forward. "Hi s'y, Batman, yon's th' music wot 'ul lull us to sleep to-night. Oh, hit's

> After *la guerre est fin-ee,*
> Hi s'y, w'en *la guerre est fin-ee. . .*

Shove me a fag, Batman. . . Oh, beg pahdon, m' Lud; Hi f'rgot you're th' pious bloke wot don't smoke. . ."

Above the dun-colored cloud of dust the sky was a fairy blue; beneath, the intense heat hung inert, with not a breath of wind to shift it. The faces of the soldiers were caked with the yellow dust; their nostrils burned; their throats parched. Cragg reached for his water bottle; he would have broached his remaining supply at a gulp, but that a hand fell upon his arm, restraining him. "Chuck it, Batman! Y' can't fight on a hempty water bottle!"

Fight! And then Cragg recalled dully that his rude companion had told him, hours since, that these troops from Salonika were among the new draft that was ordered to the line to take over an assigned section of trench. But surely a mistake had been made with regard to *him!* If he could but reach the commanding officer and explain it all . . . explain that he had been enmeshed, entangled, and that he did not really belong with these veterans . . . he was a victim, led out to slaughter. . .

As the afternoon wore away, Cragg's thought became flighty: now he stood in the magnificent salon of "Craggmont" among his adulating sycophants, a martial hero; now he was listening again in terror to Harris Chaddock's awful recital of the mental regression of those shocked by the satanic shells into eras of history long dead; now his thought clung to the awful portent of the cracked bell; now he was regarding Marian Whittier with tolerant pity, magnanimous in his vast, superior detachment; now he was hurling stones at her, obsessed by the raging desire to bury her crushed, unrecognizable body deep . . . deep . . .

Again his companion shook him—that rough, kindly, bull-

dog fighter from London's slums, who had early taken the youth under his wing, sheltered him, fought for him, loved him without reasoning why. Cragg raised his blood-shot eyes. The dreary landscape rose to meet him. Its mood was one of vast sympathy for him, of the pity that his God had withheld. . .

Night fell as the troops arrived in camp, some hundred yards back of the outer line. Unspeakably weary, galled and footsore, his skin blistered, and his swollen tongue protruding, Alden Cragg crouched close to the ground, numb with fear. From far up ahead came at intervals a dull booming. At lesser intervals flares burst, and a ghostly glow illumined the black sky. Soldiers were moving about with apparent unconcern, growling, bickering, some singing. . .

"Hi s'y, wot word from Mesopot? Who's 'eard from Townsend?"

"Hi'm feelin' sort o' sacred, Sandy, bein' 's this his th' Owly Land."

"Owly Land be blowed! Hi've come from th' Garden o' Eden! An', mate, th' lass Hi left hout there's the very one that taught th' sarpent t' lie. . ."

Cragg roused to be duly received and billeted. Then followed an indistinct period of shoving about, after which he found himself on the floor of a damp dugout, huddled with a dozen veterans before a glowing brazier, now shivering, now burning, his drawn face blanching at the muffled roar of distant guns and the sharp cracking of infrequent and badly placed shells.

"Cheer-o, Batman!" His companion of the march was still with him, and Cragg was almost grateful. "Wot, shiverin' wi' th' cold? . . . Or just jolly well scared? Buck up, Hi s'y! W'y, even 'im as starts out a windy sometimes cops a medal!" He turned to the others in the group. "Hi minds a non-com hup hin France," he continued, "wot wa'n't fit to be hin th' line—a fair windy, Hi s'y, a fair, honest windy, wot didn't mind lettin' us see that 'is backbone was mush. But," and his voice fell low, "'e was hin th' retreat from Mons. Hi was wi' 'im all th' w'y. An' then comes th' vision—th' *vision*, y' understan'!" turning to Cragg. "Th' Boches ridin' us down; our line so thin a still breeze 'ud 'a blow'd hit aw'y; an' then . . . then we sees a sort o' mist w'y up hin th' sky, a yellowish mist, risin' afore th' Boches as they come to th' top o' th' 'ill. Hi looks at th' enemy, springin' hup from th' ground, millions o' 'em! an' Hi throws m' gun aw'y an' gives hup, f'r Hi can't fight the whole dam German army, s'ys Hi! An' then comes this funny cloud o' light, an' hit's a tall man wi' yellowish 'air, hin armor, an' ridin' a white 'orse as big as a mounting! An'

'e 'olds hup 'is sword an' 'ollers: 'Turn, b'ys, an' at 'em!' An' . . . God save me! . . . Hi turns roun', an', so help me Michael! th' Boches was flyin' down th' 'ill again as hif hall th' bats o' 'ell was chasin' 'em! An' then Hi know'd th' Kaiser 'ud never see Paris, f'r th' powers that be was fightin' f'r us. An' this non-com, Batman," turning again to Cragg, "'e sees th' vision, and 'e's made over, hinstanter! No more coward after that, but a reg'lar lion! Wanted to fight th' whole bally German army single-'anded, 'e did! Didn't care a dam wot 'appened to 'im! Oh, but 'e set us a good example, 'e did! But . . . 'e got 'imself killed at Wipers."

The veterans nodded, and their faces were grave. "Y' see, Batman," the speaker continued, laying a hand on Cragg's trembling knee, "hif y'r fightin' f'r th' right y'll always get a vision, an' y'll know then that y' may lose a battle 'ere an' yon, but y'll never lose th' war."

A long silence followed. Then one of the men spoke. "Was hit, y' think, th' Maid o' Orleans? There's talk hin France o' makin' 'er a saint."

"Hi s'y," put in one of the others, "'ow can humans make saints, wot?"

"Hit's th' Church wot does it, mate."

"But Hi'm blow'd hif Hi understan' wot's to th' Church that hit can make saints o' dead 'uns, but can't keep un from dyin'!"

"But we *'as* to die, lad, no disputin' that. But after we're dead th' Church can make us saints, an' then we answers prayers, an' all that."

"Bosh! Hit's gaff y'r givin' us, son! Hit's pulpit cam-oo-flage!"

"Th' Lord answers prayers. . ."

"'E don't! Ain't millions o' prayers goin' hup to 'im ev'ry minnit? Does 'E answer 'em? Wot? Hi s'y, chuck y'r church ideas, son! Hi've been hin Flanders. Hi've seen wot Hi've seen. The' ain't no God!"

"Wot s'y, Batman?" They turned upon Cragg. "His the' a God? An' do we wake hup after we're killed, eh?"

"Hi've 'eard tell," one added, "that we do, an' that all the cussedness wot we're doin' w'en we dies we just keeps on doin', f'r things ain't so much different w'en we wakes hup."

"Then we ain't hin 'eaven?"

"Not you, leastw'ys!" laughed one.

"'Eaven!" Another spat disgustedly. "Who'd aim t' go there, hif hit's like wot th' preachers tells us? An' they don't know no more about hit than me an' you! The' ain't no God! This 'ere Jesus wot's supposed to 'ave lived 'ere an' raised th' dead an' such . . . Hi s'y, Batman, they wan't no such citizen, was they? An' the' ain't no God, wot?"

Cragg raised his head "No," he answered in a jaded voice, scarce above a whisper.

"Y'r wrong, Batman," said his companion of the march solemnly. "There *his* a God; but 'E ain't th' sort th' preachers s'y 'E his. We may see 'Im some day, an' we may not; but Hi'm playin' th' game fair f'r myself an' me mates, an' w'en th' time comes f'r me to die hit ain't goin' to find me a windy."

The rumble of the guns had noticeably increased. Cragg's companions began to look at one another significantly. "They're tellin' us," remarked one grimly, "that the're minded t' hinterfere summat wi' th' concentra-shun to-night, eh?"

"They seen th' b'ys come hup this evenin', an' they knows Allenby's movin'. 'E ain't losin' no more time startin' th' big push, an' they jolly well knows hit."

Some of the men turned and glanced curiously at Cragg. "Th' lad's not been over the top yet," whispered one. Then he sat back and began to sing:

"Oh, Hi'm not as brave as lions,
But Hi'm braver 'n a hin,
An' 'im wot fights an' runs aw'y
'Ill live to fight ag'in!"

Exhausted by hardship, and numbed by the monotony of his mental sufferings, Cragg had fallen asleep.

CHAPTER 7

AT four o'clock in the morning the British post at El Buggar was fired upon by a Turkish cavalry patrol. Shortly thereafter it was evident to the British that an attempt would be made to drive them from their position. A force of several thousand Turkish infantry, augmented by cavalry and a number of guns, advanced rapidly from the Kauwukah defenses and, on the line to El Buggar, quickly surrounded Hill 630 and completely isolated its garrison.

With this preliminary victory went up a cry from Moslem ranks: "It is the *jehad!* The Holy War is come at last! On against the dogs of Christians!" And the British, bracing themselves behind their bayonets, spat vigorously and muttered: "Come on, ye hypnotized wretches! God alone knows why ye'r fighting for Germany!" These "sons of the Covenant" might not know how the simple, fallow mind of the Turk was enshackled by the subtle suggestion emanating from the cun-

ning disciples of Mesmer; but, with the vision of that transcendental "something" always before them, the vision that had seemed to turn the tide at Mons and Ypres, that had transmuted human flesh into steel at Verdun, that had sustained them through the black days of Gallipoli and Kut-el-Amara, these dogged keepers of the Word *did* know that they could not fail.

Yet that day was recorded in the memories of the British in Palestine as one of the busiest in their various arguments with the followers of Mohammed. It was a despairing attempt by the Turk to frustrate Allenby's attack on Beersheba, and delay until a time more auspicious for themselves his drive toward Jerusalem. The squadron of the City of London Yeomanry sent to reinforce the beleagured garrison on 630 was driven back by machine gun barrage, while the Turkish troops, outnumbering the British at this point twenty to one, hurled themselves throughout the long day in repeated rushes against the stubborn defense.

From the beginning of the action Marian had been greatly disturbed. She did not fear death; yet fear assailed her incessantly, a vague, unformed apprehension, an undefined prescience, an evil foreboding. She had purposed having another talk with David Barach that day; she did not know that he was resolved not to meet her again; that he had been unable to shake off the disquieting influence resultant from that interview, and that he would not risk another. But both had been feverishly active since then, and in a common purpose, namely, to ascertain when the unit with which Alden Cragg was associated would arrive. And, though the girl did not suspect it, it was Sergeant Barach who kept issuing calls for the Penberry Ambulance Corps, thus keeping her preoccupied while he pursued a search in which he was destined to find a dubious success.

Through it all Marian battled to maintain her own sense of resistance against that which would argue to her that this experience was actual, and not a fleeting concept of the mortal mind that counterfeits God in falsehood. The increasing roar of the guns, the unwonted activity and apparent confusion back of the line, the serious demeanor of the troops, all apparently combined to impress her with its assumed reality. When the spectral procession for which she was bidden to wait came wending its tortuous way toward her, she murmured: "God is their life!" and went forward to meet it. "God is your life!" she repeated, over and over, as she looked down upon those quiet, white-faced fellows who had done their stint. "God is your life!" And she laid her hands tenderly upon their damp foreheads, and bent to catch their whispered words, some of

which were the last that would fall from their fluttering lips.

Thus the day waned. Hill 630 was still held. The enemy was hard pressing its neighbor, 720, with cavalry supported by a heavy volume of shell. Night dropped. . .

"We're hard pressed, Ma'am!" cried a big fellow, who came limping in between two supporting comrades. "We were waitin' f'r 'em, but, rot 'em! they gave us 'ell!"

"We've still got the hill!" cried another, "but . . . it's going to be a dark night!"

"O ye gods!" moaned the poet Ovid, "what darkness as of night there is in mortal minds!"

"Oh, the uselessness of it all!" cried Marian. "The futility of wars upon wars, when no effort is rightly directed to change the human mind, their source, that wishes not to change, but dies in its self-inflicted hell!"

"*Thy way and thy doings have procured these things unto thee!*" cried the prophet of old. But they stoned him and drove him from their midst.

"*How often would I have gathered thy children together . . . and ye would not!*" sighed the gentle Master. And because he exposed the darkness of the mortal mind they nailed him to a tree.

"Oh, you poor, poor fellows!" the girl murmured, as she bent over them. "When will you learn that you have not to fight and slay, but only to *know*—know that God is infinite Good! For Jesus said that to know Him was of itself life eternal.

"Oh, my poor, poor brothers!" as she moved from place to place where they lay. "All you want is love. You have starved for it. The world is starving for it. It is not war that kills, but hate. It is all mental, all mental. And the only weapon that will destroy it is the infinite Mind that is God. Oh, if you but knew!

"The battle is not yours, but God's. He is the infinite Principle of all that really is. And there is no war in Him; and so war, like all evil, like all error of thought, has no real origin, has no real history, no continuity, no consequence, no real effect.

"'*How long shall thy vain thoughts lodge within thee?*' For as you think, so shall you seem to yourselves to be. Why could you not detect the subtle mesmerism that since the beginning has struck at Truth, and that to-day is striking through Germany at the Word? Your warfare is not against the mesmerized Kaiser and his blinded hordes, but against those unseen mental forces that claim to usurp the power of God. And your only preventive, your only salvation, is to acquire that Mind

which was in Christ Jesus—nay, which *was* and *is* the Christ. But no one has taught you how."

A voice at her side startled her. "Would you look at this one and see if he's gone west?"

She turned and recognized a litter-bearer from the Penberry Corps, who stood pointing down at a still form. "From the hundred and eighty-first, sixtieth division . . ."

Marian gave a cry. "That is Sergeant Barach's . . ."

"A lot of his brigade's missing, and some of the boys who got in last night from the north."

She gasped. "Did troops arrive last night from . . . Salonika?"

"Yes, and were sent in with . . ."

She did not hear the rest; but she knew that Alden Cragg was now there.

* * * * * * * *

Cragg's numbed faculties had not been sufficiently alive to sense all that was occurring, but the increasing roar, the hurry, the rattle, the shouts and commands, all sufficiently impressed his dulled mentality with the seriousness of the business in hand, and he began to formulate plans for his own safety. Men came and went; officers looked in upon him; but it was not until late in the second evening that he was ordered to another position. And, though fear almost paralyzed his limbs, he went with a dull sense of wonder. But his wonder was transient. Fear again became dominant, and he crouched, trembling.

How long he huddled thus, he could not know, for again he was seized and shoved roughly forward. He found himself surrounded by a squad not of his own unit. The din now rose in sharp crescendo; shells burst almost over him; a burning roar filled his ears; he staggered against the parapet and stood, yokel fashion, with mouth agape. He saw men falling around him. Mutilated bodies glided past on stretchers. The hideous sights shook him. He gasped, choked, then started forward.

Terror now gripped him. He stood, glancing wildly about. Then he threw his gun aside and fled shrieking through the rending roar, fled madly through trench and traverse, falling into muddy holes, sprawling full length over trench grids, scrambling again to his feet, shouting, crying, praying, screaming, with great beads of sweat bursting from his pores. Death was pursuing him! It leered at him at every turn. It snatched at him from every side! Shrapnel whizzed past his bleeding ears. Mud and refuse bespattered him. He started to climb from the trench, but bullets tore through his helmet, and he

dropped back. Exhaustion held him where he fell. He drew himself close together and lay on his face in the mud and prayed and cursed and prayed. . .

A hand fell heavily upon his shoulder. With a shriek of terror he turned his head and looked up. A star shell burst over him. He recognized David Barach!

"Get up!" he heard the Jew shout. He felt himself pulled to his feet. A glacial sweat dripped from his mud-limned features. His jaded brain functioned but feebly. Yet he felt a vague sense of relief that the isolated scene which he had been enacting through the crowded trenches was ended. He felt himself again shoved, pulled, dragged. The pungent odors of explosives, of burning drugs, blinded his drowning eyes and tore the lining from his blistering throat. Dully he became aware of a trench filled with soldiers, strangely quiet, waiting oddly. Scaling ladders leaned against the shot-torn walls. A lieutenant stood near, whistle in hand. The hush of death was upon the scene.

Then the whistle shrieked, like the shrilling of a loosened demon. Up over the ladders, plunging, scrambling, singing, cursing, went the troops. Cragg fell back in horror. Barach seized him and buffeted the cowering wretch on. "Up!" he shouted. Then, in a flash, the situation burst upon Cragg. . .

"Up! Or by the God of Israel I'll kill you where you stand!"

The sharp prod of a bayonet caused Cragg to plunge forward. A blow from a gun-stock fell upon his back. He felt himself lifted, pushed, thrown—and always the bayonet dug him, and the agony of his body vied with the torture of his dying soul.

Before his bursting eyes stretched the hell of "No Man's Land," weird in its satanic effects. The distance was aflame. Lurid lights flashed; shells screamed; men yelled; rolling crashes billowed over the torn earth; Death swung his long scythe and howled with glee. Into it all, with Barach holding fast his arm, Cragg plunged with a hopeless, despairing cry.

Yet as he entered the vestibule of death his thought was strangely wrestling with a question that seemed to rise before him in letters of flame: "If a man die shall he live again?" There flashed over him a conviction that he was dying, had already died—yet that God would not, could not, let him taste of death! He would yet kill that devilish Barach. . . But he had thrown his gun away! Then hatred, deep and venomous, welled up within him, hatred of the wretched girl who had sent him to this hideous end, hatred of Whittier who had drugged him with his lethal dogma, hatred of the God who had failed him, of the Christ . . .

"Stand there!"

He was jerked to a violent halt. In the ghostly light the Jew loomed before him like a flaming giant.

"Gentile dog! *Christian!* Murderer of women!"

A vast pity for himself surged up in Cragg's shivering soul. He saw Barach raise his gun. His blood stopped in its course. He threw out his arms and staggered toward the Jew. "Barach!" he cried in his fearful agony; "don't shoot me! . . . Barach! . . . *God help me!*"

Paralysis held him. He stood horrified, waiting, waiting, moments, hours, centuries. . .

Then the gun roared. Cragg's head flew back. A door seemed to open quickly in his brain, and a dazzling white light shot through it. Then it closed, and darkness fell. And with it silence. He felt himself whirling, spinning, falling, falling. . .

CHAPTER 8

MARIAN stood, while the rush of battle went madly past. Then she started forward under a driving impulse. Up there, where the heavens shrieked and roared, where screaming shells flashed red and sprayed death and hideous mutilation; up there where flying metal drove unutterable agony into body and soul of those whom the preachers had said were now worms of the dust, now sons of God; there where maddened mortals cursed and raved, yelled, prayed, as they slew in frenzy those with whom they had no personal quarrel, no real animus—there, somewhere, was the man whom she had sent to his death!

But what should she do? What *could* she? At a first-aid dugout near the second line she halted. Stretcher-bearers were hurrying forward. Among them she recognized some from the Penberry Corps. Instinctively she followed them. Of human aid there was none: but she had not sought it. "God is his life!" she said aloud in the deafening din. Her thought was still a welter, and fear mocked her. In fancy she could hear Cragg's voice, calling; he was up there, meeting death, defenseless. . .

"Blimme! ye'd best go no furder! It's 'ell up there!" sounded a warning voice near her.

She looked up. Before her the trench was jammed with stretchers; behind, reinforcements were straining ahead, cursing low, wild-eyed and mad. The tumult and confusion dazed her; despite her struggles to turn back, she was borne along

by the momentum of the onward rush. The fire-trench yawned and engulfed the stream in which she was caught. On she was borne, over obstacles, through flying débris, hissing bullets, spraying shell; on past staggering, floundering wounded; on with the struggling, straining, sweating mass. In her mud-caked male attire, and in the semi-darkness, the unearthly yellowish light, her sex passed unrecognized. The yelling throng was scaling the ladders. A burly giant, mad with excitement, seized her in his brawny arms and fairly hurled her over the top. She fell on the parapet; but another trooper grasped her arm and dragged her with him into the cursed vale of "No Man's Land".

Through the girl's rushing, tumbling thought there was running an insistent strain: *"A thousand shall fall at thy side . . ."* It was with this that she sought to enwrap, not herself, but Alden Cragg, out there, somewhere, with death. Forms, ghastly beneath the bursting star shells, dropped all about her. Shell fragments ripped up the tormented ground and hurled it into her straining eyes. Bullets riddled her clothing. *"But it shall not come nigh thee. . ."* Still her prayer of assertion was for Alden Cragg. Of a sudden the man who was clutching her hand so fiercely stopped short with a dull grunt, wavered, then pitched forward on his face, dragging her with him.

For a moment she lay stunned. Then she extricated herself painfully from the death-grip of the corpse and slowly got to her feet. She stood looking hither and yon confusedly. She knew she must go back. . . She was about to turn and fly toward the British line. . . But she stood, straining her eyes ahead. There, through the smoke and fumes, the flying mud and fragments, two men were stumbling toward her, enveloped in the lurid glare that made them appear phosphorescent. Her hand went to her forehead; giddiness swept over her. . .

"Lean on me, Batman! Hi s'y, lean on me!"

Marian sprang forward. "Alden!" she cried. Sobs burst from her burning throat, tears gushed from her eyes. *"Alden!"*

A star shell exploded directly over them. Marian stood in a nimbus of light, like an image of the white Christ, her arms outstretched. The shorter of the two men halted. "F'r Gawd's sake, hit's another vision!" he gasped. "We'll drub' em. . . What!" as Marian kept calling Cragg by name, "y'r human! An' ye knows 'im? Then 'elp me lead 'im hin! Hi found 'im raisin' 'imself on 'is helbow; I puts 'im on 'is feet; but Hi sees 'e's gone 'n the 'ead! Hi come wi' 'im fr'm Salonika. Hi s'y, Batman, hit's back to Blighty now f'r ye! Got a 'ole 'n 'is

'ead . . ." He did not finish, but gave a short gasp, jerked his hand up to his breast, tottered, and fell dead at her feet.

Through the horror of it all the girl turned to Cragg, who stood swaying; but before she could grasp his arm he wheeled abruptly and started back toward the Turkish line. Marian gasped, called his name, and plunged after him. She seized his arm. A shell crater yawned wide before them, and they pitched headlong into it. Consciousness did not desert her. Slowly she got to her feet. Soldiers were peering down at her. To her bewildered thought came the realization that they were Turkish troops. One of them raised his gun and fired point blank at her. "I am still with Thee!" she breathed. And she raised her arms aloft, she knew not why.

Then she and Cragg were dragged out of the pit and started toward the Turkish trenches, prisoners of war.

CHAPTER 9

AS the first beams of the morning sun kissed the snows on Mt. Carmel, and the mists began to lift above the Holy Land, the inhabitants of El Khulîl gathered along the dusty road that enters the town from the south to observe the stained and weary throng that was defiling past under the close guard of Turkish cavalrymen.

"Smite me, Allah!" shrilled an ancient beldame, pointing with a thin and dirty finger, "if *that* one is not a woman."

A young German officer who sat on his horse but a few yards away caught the remark. The sneer of contempt with which he had been regarding the captives abruptly left his face, and he glanced curiously at the speaker, then eagerly in the direction which she indicated. Among the blood-stained, mud-caked prisoners he descried a slight figure, clad in male attire, supporting a tall, stooping soldier, who lurched along with unseeing eyes fixed upon the dust-enshrouded road. For a moment the officer stared hard at the two; then, with a suppressed cry, he jerked his horse about and pursued them into the wretched town.

El Khulîl, better known by the name of Hebron, lies twenty Roman miles south of Jerusalem, and the same distance north of Beersheba, picturesquely situated in a narrow valley surrounded by rugged hills. In ancient times it bore the name Kirjath-Arba, so called from Arba, the father of Anak and progenitor of the giant Anakim. In age it rivals Damascus, for it was well known before Abraham entered Canaan. In his-

toric interest it vies with Jerusalem itself, for here the father of future Israel, keeper of the Word, pastured his flocks, whilst he sought to impart to the idolatrous inhabitants of the land the priceless knowledge of the One God, Spirit, whose very existence resolves error and its concomitants of matter, disease, and war into the "one lie" which from the beginning has mesmerized mankind and held closed the gates of Paradise.

Within the ancient town, in the grateful shade afforded by the massive walls of the *Haram,* the drooping captives were halted. Most of them dropped to the ground in utter exhaustion; some fell asleep at once. The tall soldier with the bent shoulders stood inert, his eyes staring fixedly. His slender companion persuaded him to a sitting posture and sank down beside him. Those near enough might have seen the anguished look bestowed upon the benumbed creature, might have heard the trembling murmur: "This is a place that God possesses. . ."

"Unexpected pleasure to meet old friends from Crestelridge!" The young German officer stood looking down upon the two with a piercing gaze. Marian Whittier glanced up quickly. A cry broke from her. She struggled to her feet. "Otto Hoeffel!" she gasped. "*You,* here! And a prisoner!"

"*Major* Hoeffel, if you will be so kind," the officer corrected. "And not a prisoner." His frame became rigid, and his shoulders went back. "I am an officer in the German army."

The girl recoiled, wide-eyed, open-mouthed. Her thought flew back to her last meeting with this man. A flood of purely human emotions surged swiftly up within her, and on the heaving tide rode hideous shapes. She battled it back, and clutched at the foundation of Truth on which she had been striving so long, so desperately, to stand.

"I knew you were with the British," the major continued, smiling. "I knew that you had followed Cragg to Palestine; and I had hoped to meet you." He gave a short laugh and shrugged his shoulders. "But this exceeds my most daring anticipations."

He turned and bent over Cragg. "Look up here, Cragg!" he commanded. But the latter remained motionless and silent, staring straight ahead. The major seized him by the shoulder. "We know how to teach civility here!" he snapped, shaking him roughly. "You are not in 'Craggmont' now!"

Marian pressed quickly in between the two. "He is wounded," she said, her voice tremulous.

"Wounded?" An icy smile came into the major's face. He stooped again over Cragg and examined the wound carefully. "Did he get this in action, or . . ." He did not conclude the

remark, but straightened up and looked into the girl's drawn face. "He cannot live. . ."

"But he *shall* live!" she cried.

He laughed, and shrugged his expressive shoulders again. "But he is a prisoner of war; and we can not be bothered with wounded prisoners now."

A chill ran through the girl as she looked up into his grinning features. Giddiness assailed her, and she suppressed with difficulty an impulse to scream. Again had Israel fallen captive to the Assyrian; it was evil's hour; Truth was reversed; it was the triumph of Bel.

"We resume march shortly," she heard the major say. "But you shall ride with me." And then he was gone.

Throughout the exhausting journey from the Turkish lines Marian's mental struggle had been intense. Cragg had moved at her side a dull clod. The jagged wound in his head had bled profusely, but the mud in which he had fallen had caked about it and stanched the flow. He had not spoken nor uttered a sound. But that he moved or halted as she drew him, he might have been asleep. His body appeared to live—*but the man was not there!*

Had she permitted herself to accept the evidence of his condition, she must have gone mad. Step by step as they plodded over the rough road did she beat back the suggestions that assailed her like poisoned barbs. The terrible experience of the preceding night had sufficed to unseat a mentality less securely founded than hers. But now, in addition, came bitter self-condemnation, came merciless reproach, and paralyzing fear. "But," she had kept repeating the long night through, "Jesus in his hour of testing kept his own thought clear. He would not accept a single human circumstance or situation as real. And so I cannot, *must* not—else Alden is lost!"

To herself the girl gave scant consideration: her thought was all of Cragg in his pitiable plight. Of what had occurred between him and Barach she knew nothing; she supposed the wound in his head to have come from an enemy bullet. And, in the welter of confused thought, of fell suggestions, of impressions terrible, horrifying, there was a gleam of gratitude that she had been led to Alden, that she was with him now in his hour of awful need. Her struggle now was to hold herself truly sanctified in thought, even as did the great Teacher in that same environment, twenty centuries gone, when he proved the infinite Principle and left to the world his divine ensample, for which it has never found a substitute, though it has sought out many inventions.

Black bread in pitiably small portions was now being dis-

tributed to the prisoners, and a meager quantity of lukewarm water. Marian pressed the food upon Cragg; but he could not be induced to touch it. His stupidly staring eyes were not seeing things of this life; his mental processes had been violently reversed; and the throw-back had launched him upon a mental experience of which she could know nothing. She choked back her sobs and sat clinging to his hand.

And as she sat, her thought turned upon the strange encounter with Otto Hoeffel. Since that stormy Saturday night in March, when he had offered her his hand and had threatened her vaguely when she refused, she had seen him but once and that when Harris Chaddock had taken her driving on the afternoon that Alden and Ethel had announced their betrothal. She had seen him standing on a down-town corner, and had bowed to him as the car sped past. He had not returned her greeting; and as she glanced back she had caught a dark look that had remained with her for days after. She had long suspected him—his anger over her rejection of his proposal had confirmed the suspicion—but that he should be revealed as a German officer—that he should be *here*—and that she should now be his captive—Ah, if the universe were composed of matter, as dull-witted mortals so tenaciously believe, such things could never, never happen! But it was all mental, all an experience in human consciousness, a drama of mortal thought. . . The tired girl gave over her speculations. Nothing was strange to her now.

Within an hour the command was given to get under way again. *"He* knoweth the way that I take," the girl murmured. And then as if in a dream, she found herself being assisted into a huge, battered car beside Major Hoeffel. Another officer occupied the front seat with the chauffeur. And she went without protest, for the major had said: "I have ordered Cragg conveyed in a lorry. We will take him with us into Jerusalem."

Jerusalem! Marian looked up at him. She seemed to awake. And she trembled a little, but not with fear. He seemed to be someone far different from the Otto Hoeffel of Crestelridge. She was yearning to talk with him. But he was now absorbed in his own reflections. To him, this sacred environment meant nothing. The capture of a handful of British soldiers was unimportant. It was the significance of the skirmish in which Cragg and the girl had been captured that was occupying his thought. The Turkish attempt to frustrate the concentration had failed; Beersheba, he now knew, must fall; Jerusalem . . . but it should pass into British hands an empty shell! And to accomplish that end he was taking these straggling captives north to make of the ancient city a vast powder

mine. Yet in the launching of Allenby's drive he could not but see the beginning of the final phase of an unholy war which he himself must admit to have been conceived in sin and deliberately conducted in deepest iniquity. . . It had proved to be a wrong method, a bad guess. In the end, which he now believed to be not far off, he saw the ruin of the Fatherland, the abasement of a haughty people. . .

He ground his teeth and uttered low an imprecation. Marian heard it and glanced again at him. "The Garden of Eden," he said with hasty irrelevance, and a forced smile, "could not have been located here, could it?" The sun was mounting, and the heat and dust were stifling.

"The Garden of Eden," she replied, "is always a function of our thinking."

"And, speaking of thinking, you should have been thinking protective thoughts, should you not? Then, perhaps, you would not have become a prisoner of war. Your strange views, Marian"—it was the first time he had used that name here—"always interested me. But at last you have demonstrated that, like every woman, you need someone to think for you. Fortunately for you, that office falls to me."

She looked up quickly. He caught the apprehensive glance, and laughed. "So you came down here with Penberry's Ambulance Corps, in search of Cragg! *Himmel!* a joke. But it was Ethel's duty to come, not yours . . . unless . . . Ah! you have replaced her already in Alden's affections? Then he has shown a wise preference. Ethel is a nobody. You . . . you know what I think of you."

He paused. Again he laughed, but without merriment. "You are wild to know many things about me, is it not so?" he resumed. "How did I know that you were here? And Cragg? How did I know that Penberry . . . *Donnerwetter!* I have lived in Penberry Hall. As his guest, he gave me valuable information . . . Oh, yes, before I went to Crestelridge." He looked at her covertly. Then he went on. "I suppose Penberry outfitted the corps in memory of his son who was killed in the Spanish-American War, is it not so? Did . . . did Penberry speak of this son, Max?"

"I never heard of him," Marian answered, now greatly wondering.

"No? Oh, Max Penberry was a good fellow. But he married against his father's wishes . . . an American woman . . . ever hear? No? So Penberry disinherited him. How do I know?" Another laugh. "Oh, I have Penberry's complete biography. I have Whittier's . . . it would surprise you. I have managed to live in fashionable homes in New York, London,

Paris, everywhere . . . compiling secret biographies of the inmates. You see, Marian, I am in the Intelligence Service of the German Government. I know your history from the cradle."

Marian gasped. "Then you . . . you are not . . . an American?"

He drew himself up stiffly. "American!" he exclaimed. *"Gott sei Dank,* no! I am German."

"And you deceived us. . .!" It was as if the curtain which had hung before her that stormy night when she had sought Madam Galuth in her distress had suddenly lifted. She knew now that she had fallen into the hands of one of the most astute members of that vast and intricate organization that served the German Staff as eyes and ears. She knew now how Crestelridge had slept under the mesmeric spell cast by the artful masters of this man—this man who had sought her hand in wedlock, who now possessed her. . .

He did not! He could not! The Goliath that had mesmerized Israel into believing him invincible should not similarly terrify her! She strove for calm. And for some time they rode in silence, the major again sunk in his thoughts, which, as indicated by the hard lines that came into his face, were far from happy; while the girl, her mentality now roused to violent activity, sought to recall bits of former conversations with him, incidents, experiences, which when pieced together would throw further light upon his present motives and probable course with her and Cragg.

Of a sudden she heard him speak. "It will end . . . soon . . . yes. But," through his set teeth, "let them beware *how* it ends!" Then he turned to her. "Ted Sayor called you a prophet. . . The war, how will it end?" he abruptly demanded.

She was perplexed by the sudden turn of his conversation, but she controlled herself and made reply. "The Central Powers will yield to the Entente's ideals," she said.

For a moment he made as if to combat her words; then he sat back and nodded his head slowly. "You probably are right," he said. "We shall capitulate to what you are pleased to call your ideals. And we shall try to live up to them. But will *you?"*

It was the girl's turn to be surprised, and she showed it in her face and words. "I do not understand you," she said. "The war—to those who really know—is only the externalization of the conflict between right and wrong that is taking place in human consciousness. It can only end as I have said. And another war, worse than this, can be prevented only by a complete and radical change of thought. For as men think, so are they and their environment and their conditions."

He remained silent for some time. Then: "Do you think we Germans plunged the world into this war?" he asked, an odd expression on his face.

"It was wrong thinking that plunged the world into war," she answered. "Not the wrong thinking of a single nation, but of many peoples, trained for ages in the false mesmeric systems of the Antichrist. Germany is not alone to blame. We are *all* to blame."

Again her words seemed to make him reflect. At length he said, very seriously: "I am a student of philosophy and history. I did not approve this war. And now I shudder to think that we shall come out of this struggle only to enter upon a longer period of universal strife. Is it not so? For when we yield, will France have the moral strength to resist her long nurtured idea of revenge? I think not. Will Italy remember history and resist the attempt to restore the ancient empire of Rome around the Mediterranean? Will England give up her dreams of world-empire?—dreams that we Germans have been forced to abandon. *Ach,* yes, we Germans shall submit to the ideals that our enemies believe they are fighting for now, but that, once the war ends, they will quickly abandon. No, it is not humanly possible that they should retain them."

"But they could," the girl insisted.

He gave a short, dry laugh. "Yes? And how?"

"If they were Christians," she concluded.

His shoulders went up again. "We Germans are Christians; the French and English are Christians, yes. But who knows what Christianity is? You, perhaps?"

"Yes," she answered simply. "It is Truth."

"Truth? And what is that?" He looked away as he spoke. Against the far horizon an undulating line of lofty wall, turret-crowned, glistened white in the dazzling sun. He extended an arm toward it. "Pilate asked that same question over there twenty centuries ago. But it has never been answered."

"It *was* answered, by demonstration," she said gently, "before Pilate asked it."

He looked at her quizzically for a moment, then settled back without replying. Silence lay upon them both as the car, with its grim, war-scarred officers and wide-eyed girl, drew on toward the embattlemented walls of the storied city.

CHAPTER 10

THE deeply motived zeal for a holy place, which should be to the mortal mind the visible abode of its concept of God, found externalization to the Hindu consciousness in sacred Benares, to the Mohammedan in holy Mecca, and to the Hebrew in the glorious temple on Mt. Moriah in the ancient Syrian town once known as Uru-salem, the city of safety. What though the sapient Solomon had glimpsed the spiritual fact that "the heaven and the heaven of heavens cannot contain Thee"? to the Jewish mind, mired in matter, the great temple and its material environment became the *locus* supreme where God was to be found and where worship was most acceptable to Him. Yet the hour came swiftly that was prophesied by the Nazarene, when true worshipers should worship Him in spirit and in truth, when the material symbol of His dwelling should be thrown down, and the scourging hosts of Islam should stable their horses on its desecrated site. It was to be shown that, to the true worshiper, there is no holy place: he, like the Master, who can see the abode of Principle in the spiritualized thought of a Roman centurion, or a bereaved maid in a cottage of Bethany, rears God's temple within and worships Him in the silent demonstration of His allness.

To Marian, Jerusalem had appeared the home of stifling superstition, rather than of ascertained truth. To her, the desolated ruin was a striking symbol of prophecy fulfilled. Over its sterile waste, long parched by the winds of mortal thought, lay strewn the whitened bones of human concepts. On these the modern Huns, like loathsome vultures, sat pecking for material sustenance that was not there.

Yet from afar the historic city now breathed forth its age-old subtle influence, enveloping her, and arousing within her deep sentiments akin to awe. A pervading stillness lay upon the distant scene, unbroken by the ocean breezes that wanton over Sharon's plain. The city's austere setting, in a mountainous landscape of savage sternness, with mitigating gleams of field and pasture and wooded slope, impressed her profoundly with the barrenness of the idolatry that still reigned there. About its lofty walls, gleaming in the morning sun, around its crumbling turrets, its tottering towers, its frequent and constricting gates, hovered myriad associations, beautiful, terrible, still mightily potent with awful warning to those who yet tithe mint and cummin but flout God's law. As she drew nearer, the soft whir of pigeons circling around the ancient

battlements suggested peace. Her emotions seemed about to overpower her. She caught her breath. . .

Then she heard the major speak. "It is the *Götterdämmerung!* We are lost!" And as she glanced toward him he turned upon her so swiftly, and with such malignant hatred blazing from his eyes, that she shrank back. "England has hypnotized you!" he cried. "She has hypnotized you, and all her allies! But . . ." He appeared to recover himself. The girl looked at him in wonder. Though she had never known him well, yet the few short months of his active participation in the war had seemed to fuse the elements of his character and recast them in a mass of such indefiniteness as to suggest . . . anything.

Jerusalem, though not in peril, was yet in sore trial. Large bodies of troops had not been stationed there, but it was the headquarters and base of the Prussianized Turkish army. Staffs and depots were there established, and the ancient Hebrew capital lay in the despotic grasp of a military autocracy that wasted scant thought on the dire needs of the despairing populace. War had isolated these from the outer world; their food had been commandeered; prices had soared on swift wings; and starvation had long stalked through the narrow streets, blowing its withering breath upon thousands. For their pleas, their plaints, the suffering populace were given spectacular lessons in frightfulness, and the majesty of the Assyrian creed of force was externalized in public executions, upon which attendance was rendered compulsory. Without the Jaffa gate the girl's eyes met the hideous gallows, on which was imposed the penalty for expressed approval of Anglo-Israel's policy toward Esau's race. From the outer fringe of Jerusalem the Jaffa road was fairly blocked with jouncing lorries and speeding cars. The business of war had assumed immense proportions since the attack on the Gaza-Beersheba line; yet in the somber faces of the motley throng that lined the crowded thoroughfare Marian thought she read, despite their evidences of woe, a suppressed faith in those crusaders from the Land of the Covenant who were sturdily pushing their way to the north. The Turks were vigorously preaching the *jehad,* but their pronouncements echoed hollowly in the ears of these. The prescience of a vast change was reflected in the attitude of all, of whatever race or creed; all seemed to hear the fall of the leaden hammer tolling the prophetic hour.

The Jaffa gate engulfed the girl and her silent captors, and she found herself within the sacred precincts of the city of David. All about her rose hoary ruins: here, the ancient sites of Phasaelus, Mariamne, and Hippicus, ghostly guardians of

Herod's spectral palace; there, Mt. Zion, once crowned with glittering marble halls; and still beyond, holy Moriah, where, above sparkling terraces, once rose the glorious temple. The impregnable Tower of Antonia had occupied two-thirds of Moriah's sacred area, a vast and frowning pile, with armories, barracks, and echoing dungeons that penetrated far into the solid rock and harbored every terror that haunts the realms of the darkened human mind. Now, as Marian entered the ancient capital, the war steeds of Islam were treading down the site where once rose the psalms of a nation; now crumbling Antonia, a derision to modern artillerists, was serving the caprice of Major Otto Hoeffel, of the German Staff, himself far more philosopher than warrior, more poet than statesman, whose haughty soul was slowly sinking in abasement—nay, disintegration—beneath the blows of what he, in his unenlightenment, cynically called an undiscriminating fate.

At the citadel, occupying the middle portion of the western side of Mt. Zion, the cavalcade halted. A Turkish barracks was located there, and into this the prisoners brought up that morning from Hebron were conducted. Marian's heart beat high; yet the lorry in which Cragg lay so quiet was given no attention. And she wondered. But presently the major returned to her side. "I must explain," he said, "that my headquarters are in the old Tower of Antonia, up ahead. We shall take Cragg there. The basement has sometimes served as a hospital for fever patients. The cool vaults stimulate their recovery. You will remain there for the present . . . with Cragg." He nodded toward a venerable ruin visible at that instant at the far end of the tortuous road. "It fairly breathes romance," he added abstractedly. "Next to philosophy and Wagner, I love old walls and towers."

The girl sank back and waited. At any rate, she was not to be separated from Alden—at least for the present. "It is a place that God possesses," she repeated mentally. "Though I descend into hell, yet *He* is there."

The ill-paved, narrow street swarmed with somber-clad Jews of many nationalities, mingling with bright-robed orientals of varied race and clime. Scowling Turks battered their way through the poverty-stricken crowds; dogs scurried yelping; filth poisoned the morning air, as fraud and fanaticism rendered noxious the religious faiths contesting for supremacy there. Of a sudden it flashed through the girl's tumultuous thought that the road over which they were traveling had familiar aspects. Its arches seemed to speak, its gloomy corridors to echo faint sighs of distant lamentation. In fancy she saw a man, tear-stained and bent, staggering over its broken pave-

ment with the world's sins on his thought. Here he fell beneath his crushing burden; there the hissing lash seared his quivering flesh; yonder the rabble mocked, mesmerized by the lying claims of evil; and high up there sat the ignorant, cowering vicar of the Roman Kaiser, bartering Truth for the embers of hell. The rubbish of ages, fathoms deep, covers the road which the Nazarene trod on his way to death; so the ecclesiastical rubbish of centuries of material thinking covers the spiritual teaching which this man knew alone would save the deluded world that rejected him.

The great temple of Solomon anciently stood on the ridge east of the city now known as the Haram-esh-Sherif, the threshing floor of Araunah, consecrated by David's altar. This area on the summit of Mt. Moriah is nearly a mile in circuit and comprises some thirty-five acres. The present Turkish barracks at the northwestern corner of the temple enclosure occupy the site of the Castle or Tower of Antonia, rebuilt by Herod from the former citadel of Baris, and renamed after the Roman Emperor Mark Antony. The castle, which was erected to defend the temple on the north and to guard the sacred robes of the High Priest, had formerly a tower on each corner. The one at the southeast, rising to a height of more than a hundred feet and overlooking the entire temple area, was used by the Romans to control the excited worshipers at the Passover season. From the tower at the southwestern corner ran subterranean passages, by which soldiers could be hurried into the cloisters of the temple in times of disturbance. The northeast corner of the area is occupied by the Old Serai, formerly the site of the Roman Prætorium, and now a Turkish barracks. The ground underlying the entire Haram-esh-Sherif is honey-combed with ancient cisterns, hewn in the living rock, and all connected by rock-cut conduits. These cisterns, from forty to sixty feet deep, served the temple as water reservoirs, or as receptacles for the sacrificial blood that flowed in great profusion from above. From the Old Sarai the Via Dolorosa runs to the Holy Sepulchre and the ancient citadel of Mt. Zion. A high bridge doubtless formerly rose above the city and connected the sacred mounts of Zion and Moriah, but its fragments now mingle with the drift of ages that covers deep the winding streets where once wandered the homeless Man of Sorrows.

The car stopped before the entrance to the ancient Tower, and the officers quickly descended and assisted Marian to alight. Soldiers gathered about them, and strangely bedizened folk who stared at the arrivals with languid curiosity. Marian stood for a moment, as if overwhelmed by her environment; then she

turned and hastened up ahead to the lorry from which Cragg was being taken. As she arrived at his side she saw his long, gaunt frame begin to shake, as if awaking to life. His arms waved for a moment uncertainly. Then, with a convulsive effort, he lifted himself to a sitting posture. The girl ran to him. "Alden!" she cried; "Alden, it is Marian Whittier!"

While she was yet speaking the man struggled to his feet. For a moment he stood swaying, his head moving from side to side and his eyes roving over the gaping group before him. Of a sudden his gaze rested upon Marian and hung. His eyes began to glow. A sinister look came into his face. Slowly he bent toward the road, his eyes still fastened upon the girl. Then, with a quick movement, he swept up a handful of stones and hurled them full at her. But for the prompt action of the major, who apprehended Cragg's intention and drew her sharply to one side, she would have been struck. The major gave a command, and several of the soldiers threw themselves upon Cragg and forced him, struggling madly, again upon the litter.

"Delirious," commented the major, as he turned away from Cragg, who now lay quiet, his strength exhausted. "The end is not far off."

Marian choked back her protest, and silently followed the litter into the building, through the massive portal whose yawning aperture in days long gone was wont to belch forth shame and woe in helmet and cuirass upon the stricken Jew. Down through echoing corridors, past dark rooms of mildewed stone, and at length into a large vaulted chamber, fairly well lighted and airy, and sparsely furnished with a few empty cots and rude tables and stools. A woman approached as they entered.

"She is the attendant, an Egyptian," the major explained to Marian. "She does not speak English. But I know you speak French readily, so you will get along. She comes from Port Said. . . Of course you understand that you are a prisoner," he added, with a sudden change. "But you are under my protection. Cragg also. I brought him here for your sake. This woman will take care of you both."

He turned to the attendant and gave a few instructions in the French tongue, then bowed to Marian and took his departure. The girl, as if in a dream, watched him go. When the door closed upon him she caught her breath and moved slowly over to the cot where Cragg lay. The Egyptian followed her.

"He breathes hard," the latter ventured, speaking in excellent French and looking down at the heaving form. "One would say he was having a troubled dream, is it not so?"

Marian sank to her knees beside Alden. The ancient walls

seemed to close about her, leaving only the brown and wrinkled face of the Egyptian peering at her across the body of the man. Then oblivion stole through the brooding silence of the old Tower and tenderly enveloped her.

CHAPTER 11

HIS torpid mentality had been dully conscious of sound, indistinct, then like a low roar, which had seemed to come from an indefinite distance through a gray enveloping veil. He had not been thinking, but perceiving sensuously. But now his mentality seemed to stir, slowly, reluctantly, like the first almost imperceptible movement of a complicated mechanism under the impulsion of a motive force. The low roar began gradually to assume for him a definiteness. He at length recognized a sound: it was a laugh. Mental functioning had begun.

At long intervals thereafter he dully recognized other sounds: these were voices. And there were sounds of sobs, of moans, and the clank of fetters. Slowly, like mist, the gray veil dissolved. Then he knew that his eyes were open: he saw figures gliding about in the weird twilight. . .

He was not aware that he had raised an arm, but a consciousness of pain told him that it had fallen. And with the pain came a sharpening of perception. His aching hand closed. Minutes later he recognized that it had closed over an iron chain. The perception startled him. His arm jerked spasmodically, and his hand rolled off the chain. His fingers moved, and scraped against stone. And he knew that it was stone, and that it was wet. . .

Again a great vacuum engulfed him. Then he roused suddenly, summoned all his returned strength, and threw it into a convulsive movement that raised his creaking body upon an arm. For an interval he hung thus. Perception of self and environment began to surge in upon him in a flood. In the feeble light he glimpsed his body. He saw that it was naked but for a cloth about the loins. And it was bound in chains. He stared at it with bursting eyes, striving to sense a meaning, to reach a definite understanding. Then he turned his head. He was in a large vaulted room of stone, dimly lighted by grated windows set high against the ceiling. It possessed a ghastly, abnormal look, and a great fear smote him. Desperately he strove to recognize his environment, to place himself in it, to link it with a past. Wildly he struggled to recall his

identity, to realize who he was. But the name of Alden Cragg did not recur to him. Instead came a terrifying sense of knocking upon a door that was closed. . .

He fixed his bulging eyes upon the figures that crowded the room. A rasping cry burst from him: they were like himself, naked and in chains! But more, there was that about these figures that shook him while he gazed. They seemed spectral things, brought up out of a dead world. Many of them were of huge frame, with massive shoulders and bulging muscles. Many were heavily bearded. There were beetling brows, piercing eyes, swarthy skins; there were black skins, and red, and some pale white. Some of the figures laughed coarsely as they paced back and forth. Some whispered low. Others sat dully on the wet floor with bowed heads. And there were some who wept, and some who moaned, and some who sought to give comfort. The air was heavy and fetid; and thick shadows, rather than light, seemed to stream in at the high, grated slits in the mildewed walls.

As he sat, leaning upon an elbow and staring dully, two of the figures approached. They were of huge stature, with immense brawn, fair complexions, light hair and blue eyes.

"By Aphrodite!" cried one, drawing his clenched fist up to his shoulder and rattling the heavy chain that fettered his wrist, "but for the riot at the gate we had not been thrown into this foul pit. But what matters to us a few hours here, when we know that we shall soon exchange the *ergastulum* for the *arena*? Ah, may the gods send me against none but Romans! Jove! I shall crush their skulls like paper."

"Think not so easily to win thy freedom, O Greek," replied his companion. "The Romans are valiant, else were they not masters of the world. Choose rather barbarians for thy foes in the *arena*—if choice thou hast—or soft-boned Jews like this dog." He stopped before the gaping creature and kicked him contemptuously.

The Greek laughed. "The Jew was valiant enough at the gate when he stoned the Nazarene, O son of Brith-Ain. I count him worthy to be thy kin."

"My kin? A truce, friend! Mock me no further, I pray!"

"The gods forfend, for I am right, as I shall prove! Hast thou not said thy island home in the north, which Cæsar called Britannia, is known as the Land of the Covenant, and that because the prophet Jeremiah did find therein a refuge some five centuries gone? That thither he conveyed the Hebrew Ark and tables of the Law?"

"I said it," the Briton replied.

"Do I not speak the Hebrew tongue? And well I know that

in that tongue the word for *covenant* is *Brith,* while *island* is expressed by *Ain.* Hence, thou art a son of *Brith-Ain.* But, more: since *man* in the Hebrew tongue is *Ish,* thou wert better called *Brith-Ish.* And by that name I henceforth shall remember thee. But look, the Jew recovers from his hurt. Tell us, O son of Judah," he went on, bending over the staring, blinking creature, "why thou wert so zealous to stone the teacher, and thus incite a riot for which thou wilt be well flogged?"

The slave looked up at the speaker stupidly. For a moment his tongue refused to function. Then he spoke thickly and with a great effort, his voice sounding in his ears like an echo from ages past. "Where—am—I?"

"Now the gods defend!" cried the Greek. "Hast happily forgot that thou art a slave, a Jewish slave, bought to grace the household of the Roman procurator?"

The slave fell back, as if struck a heavy blow. The others laughed in his face at his confusion. "When thy wit returns," the Greek pursued mockingly, "thou wilt recognize the *ergastulum* of the Tower of Antonia—for thou art in Jerusalem now, O Jew, and shouldst feel at home. But say, why so mad to stone the Nazarene?"

The slave lay with open mouth, silent, his thought awhirl. The Greek waited a moment, then resumed. "But for thee, Jew, we had not been cast into this foul hole. By Aphrodite! but never did I behold a countenance so venomous as thine when thy gaze fell upon the Jewish teacher as he stood by the gate. What hast thou against him? Dost know him? Speak!"

Again the veil lifted and the creature struggled to collect and formulate his chaotic thought. "I . . . I am not clear," he said thickly. "I . . . have lost account . . ."

"The stone that struck thee on the head appears to have addled thy wits greatly," laughed the Greek. "Hast forgot that we are still in the seven hundred and eightieth year of Rome?"

The uncomprehending creature blinked up at him without speaking. The Greek turned and glanced at the other inmates of the room, then back at the slave. "Hast been so fortunate as to forget that the Roman procurator has purchased us? Then be reminded, O Jew, that we that have the brawn will go to the *arena,* but thou, weakling, wilt be first flogged, then sent to the fields."

"The Roman procurator!" the slave murmured uncomprehendingly, his eyes roving.

"Of a truth, Pontius Pilate, who has but come up from Cæsarea to attend the Feast of Tabernacles. By Aphrodite! but thou wert a fool to attack that Jesus as we entered the gate, for Pilate now will . . ."

"Attack . . . Jesus!"

"I have said. For when thy gaze did fall upon him thou didst lose thy wits and forthwith begin to hurl stones at him for his strange words. But his supporters heartily returned the missiles. The soldiers suppressed the riot—but thou wert then unconscious, felled by a stone that took thee fair upon the temple. We bore thee into the *ergastulum* senseless—as by the gods thou still seemest to continue!"

Throughout this brief recital the slave remained as if stunned. When it was concluded, the portals of his mind seemed to fly open, and terror, vast and horrible, rushed in. A piercing cry burst from his lips. He saw the Greek and the Briton fall back and stare at him in amazement. He saw others, attracted by his cry, come crowding about.

"The blow from the stone," the Greek explained, nodding sagaciously.

"Nay," said one, "it is a curse because he stoned the teacher."

"Of a truth," put in another; "for some say this Jesus is the very Son of God. Hast heard his claims? He would be the Christ. But this Jew did right, according to his religion. Their Messiah comes not a lowly carpenter, but a king."

The slave roused up. A light seemed to flash through his brain; a gleam penetrated his darkened mind. In its illumination he reached out and seized something tangible. Of a sudden he cried: "I am a Christian!"

His auditors heard him without emotion. "Possibly his words would mean that he is seeking the Messiah," the Greek ventured, somewhat loftily. "For the Hebrew scripture is full of promises of a Christ."

"By Bacchus!" cried a burly giant, "this man is not a Jew. He worships at the shrine of Fortuna, his mother. He serves the gods of Rome. I know him now. His poverty brought him to serfdom in Azzah."

The slave gasped. A single thought had obsessed him, born of the words that smote his throbbing ears. "I am rich!" he cried. "I am rich! Rich!"

A general laugh followed. "Then purchase thy freedom from slavery," the Greek mocked. "Pilate hath need of thy talents."

"Bah! A denarius for all thy riches!" cried another, turning away in disgust. "Thou shalt go to the mill for inciting the riot at the gate, and . . ."

"Curb thy tongue!" the Greek interjected in a hoarse whisper. "The overseer enters!"

The slave followed the timid gaze of the others and saw a tall man, heavy of frame and with brutal features, enter the room at that moment, accompanied by two soldiers. The man

wore a short tunic, bound at the waist with a cord, and carried in his hand a slender roll of parchment. His head was bare, as were his legs and feet, although the latter were encased in sandals. The soldiers were clad in the scales, breastplates and helms of the Augustan period, and carried small shields. The occupants of the room fell back before the trio. Those who had been sitting got to their feet and slouched against the damp walls. The overseer halted midway the room and glanced about imperiously. Then he opened the roll and handed it to the soldiers, at the same time giving them a command, but in a voice so low that the slave's ears did not catch the words. Immediately the soldiers began to group the fettered inmates and march them from the room through the great doors, from beyond which came a faint glint from other helmets and breastplates.

Slowly, painfully, with eyes straining and jaw hanging, his brain burning, his thought now vivid, now utterly quenched, the slave struggled to his feet and stood shaking. His head spun, and the room rocked before him. He passed a hand before his eyes and tried to think back beyond his awakening. But if past there were, it was closed to him now. Beyond the first hazy moments of returning consciousness all was black. He raised his blurred eyes and met those of the overseer bent sternly upon him.

"Perpol!" the latter exclaimed, "a comely weakling. A fool, but a choice for Procula."

He came to where the slave stood. For a moment he scanned him closely, then turned to the soldiers. "To the baths and the wardrobe," he commanded. "He is such a one as Procula long has sought. Forbear to flog him. Take him to her." He concluded the command with a low laugh, then turned and left the room.

A few moments afterward the bewildered slave, naked, befouled, and shackled, found himself following the silent soldiers from the fetid prison. Then the shades closed in upon him, and the feeble flame of intelligence was again snuffed out.

CHAPTER 12

WHEN Marian awoke, the sun's beams were tumbling through the narrow windows of the big room and driving the shadows in rout back into the mildewed corridors. She was lying, fully dressed, on a cot, but she had only a faint recollection of having been placed there by the

Egyptian. For a few moments she lay quiet, coördinating her thought; then a lisping shuffle announced the approach of the woman, and she sprang up.

"*Eh, bien,* my little flower! You are a new woman, is it not so?" the wrinkled crone gave her greeting. "The major came again last night, and brought a surgeon to look at him," indicating the motionless Cragg; "but I would not wake you. The surgeon said . . ."

"You are good to me, and to him," Marian interrupted, as she turned to the cot where Cragg lay. "I wish to thank you."

"Oh, *la, la!* And now I shall bring you coffee and bread. The surgeon said . . ."

"Yes, I will eat now. And please let me help you," said Marian.

"Help? Of course, little one. You will have to work here. There will be other patients soon, now that you British have begun your attack. But do you not wish to know what the surgeon said?"

"No. Tell me, please, has he slept all this time?"

"He has not moved, except to raise his arms as if to drive away the flies. At times he muttered; and once I thought he would try to rise, and I was about to call the guard: but after that he fell back and lay as you see him now. *Ma chérie,* you love him? It is sad, for he is dying."

A cry broke from the girl. "No! He is not! He cannot! Do not say that again! There, let me go with you for the coffee."

The Egyptian regarded her in silent astonishment; then, with a gesture of complete disinterestedness, she motioned her to follow and turned away. Marian's thoughts were again in riot, and fear dinned in her soul with its temptation to deny God. The magnitude of her problem seemed overwhelming, and the tempter bade her bow and worship the gods that she was striving so desperately and against such seemingly tremendous odds to prove false.

In the smaller room which apparently served the improvised hospital-prison as kitchen the Egyptian motioned the girl to a table and set the simple breakfast before her. "The major will come again this morning," she announced. "*Eh, bien,* he boasted last night of his luck in capturing the beautiful English girl."

Marian looked up. "I am not English," she said quietly. "I am American."

"But," exclaimed the woman, "you were with the British!"

"Yes," Marian replied, and somewhat wearily, "the Penberry Ambulance Corps."

At these words the Egyptian started, then bent forward and stared hard at the girl. "Penberry?" she said in a low tone.

"Simeon Penberry, of London," Marian amplified, but without interest.

"And the man out there that the major permits you to nurse?"

"He is Alden Cragg, of London, but he enlisted in the States, in Crestelridge, a suburb of New York."

The Egyptian came closer and leaned far across the table. Her eyes were wide, and a strange light glowed in them. She made as if to speak; but, as if obeying a more cautious impulse, straightened up and turned away. A moment later she went back into the big room, leaving the girl to finish her breakfast alone.

Shortly thereafter, as Marian was sitting beside Cragg, fanning away the tormenting gnats, Major Hoeffel entered briskly, accompanied by an officer, likewise German and wearing the insignia of army surgeon. The major came at once to her and presented the surgeon with as much ceremony as if the ancient cellar in which they were so strangely assembled were a Berlin salon. The latter, after bowing stiffly, turned to Cragg.

"It is good to see you," the major greeted Marian. "You do not find these quarters unbearable, I hope. It is not Crestelridge, but . . . you shall have better soon." He drew up a stool and sat down. "Odd that we should both be here, isn't it? And that we should both know Penberry," he resumed genially. "Tell me about your stay with him. I need distraction this morning, and thoughts of Penberry's green lawns and bright gardens are like refreshing breezes—doubly refreshing when voiced by you."

Marian looked up quickly. The Egyptian was standing directly behind the major, with her black eyes staring straight into those of the girl. Marian's heart gave a leap, and a chill swept over her. Slowly the Egyptian shifted her gaze; then she turned and shuffled softly away. Marian's eyes went to the major. He was closely watching her every move. She clutched at her poise and strove for calm. "I cannot talk of Simeon Penberry," she said in a shaking voice, "when Alden demands my every thought."

"A merited rebuke, knowing now how you feel toward him," said the major. "*Herr Doctor*," rising and addressing the surgeon, "what is your opinion?"

"It is as I said last night," the latter replied, looking up from Cragg and speaking in fluent English. "Not a cranial fracture, but a glancing blow from a bullet, rupturing a blood vessel in the brain and producing suspended animation. The

result will be either death very shortly, or paralysis and impaired mentality. An operation might be beneficial; it might result in death. Nothing else can be done."

The major looked queerly at Marian, then back at the surgeon. "I can have him removed to the Kaiserin Hospital for an operation," he said, with a manifestation of reluctant interest.

The surgeon bowed his approval. Marian, her whole being rising in protest against the cruel verdict, turned upon the major in appeal.

"He gave his life on the battlefield," she pleaded; "you cannot restore to him what he has given. I came across the seas searching for him; I found him; he is mine now, mine alone! Let me have him. . ."

Cragg stirred, and they all turned quickly to him. He raised his arms; then his whole body shook violently. The major gazed at the prostrate man in fascination. His eyes widened. "He is alive," he cried, starting back, "but . . . *Gott in Himmel,* he is not *here!*"

At that instant Cragg pulled himself up and sprang to his feet. The surgeon fell back in surprise and consternation, while Cragg, swaying and stumbling, started toward the exit. The major, recovering, called loudly, and two soldiers ran in from the corridors. In a trice Cragg was overpowered and forced back to his cot. "He must be strapped to the bed!" the surgeon exclaimed excitedly. Marian turned to the major. The latter looked into the girl's pleading eyes, and from them down at Cragg. He shook his head. The surgeon glanced quizzically from the major to the girl; then he uttered a grunt of disapproval, and with a shrug of his shoulders turned away. A few moments later he left the room. The major raised his eyes from Cragg to Marion. There was a look in his face that had never been there in Crestelridge. "I have seen so many die . . . so many," he said. "But Alden . . . I think it is best that he should go." He stood regarding the girl with such a meaningful expression that she shuddered. But before she could audibly combat his words an orderly entered with a message that caused him to take his leave at once. Marian turned wearily and drew up the stool beside the dying man.

"They would kill you, Alden," she murmured, bending over him; "but God is your life."

* * * * * *

The key of memory's storehouse was not there, although he ceased not to grope for it. Could he but find it, he might learn through what eons of time he had been fighting the light that was now suffusing him, engulfing him, permeating him, expos-

ing his naked soul and stinging it into pain acute, maddening. If he could but blot out that blinding light, this sharp sense of pain must cease. And, oh, how tired, how inexpressibly tired he was! Distress, pain, insufferable weariness. . .

A sound came from beyond the glow. Once more he struggled, fiercely, desperately, madly, to break through the light and into that locus from whence the sound appeared to come. It was a voice. It was a familiar voice. A thrill shot through him. That voice would link him with the lost something that he was so feverishly seeking. He tried to answer, to call back. . .

The glow swiftly faded, the veil dropped from before his eyes, and he looked down into the upturned, smiling face of a young girl.

"You strange fellow!" he heard her exclaim. "You beat the air as if the room were filled with gnats. And I am Miriam, not *Marian*, as you have been so stubbornly saying. Tell me now," she pursued, coming closer, "did you so love this Marian? An odd name, indeed! Or . . ." She paused and looked up coyly at him. "Perchance you meant me. But, oh, you are a slave! . . . though you are most handsome. Besides, if you really meant me Procula would dismiss me and have you flogged to death . . . though I do believe she loves you for your rare beauty. But, listen . . ." She paused and glanced furtively about. Then, assured that she would not be overheard: "If you would save yourself from the *ergastulum*, or worse, you must cease to proclaim yourself a Christian. What means that term? Is it that you would have it known that you accept the claims of the Nazarene teacher who professes to be the Hebrews' Christ? Yet that cannot be, for you stoned him at the gate but yesterday . . ."

As she talked his thought cleared, but there came not the slightest recollection of aught that had previously occurred. His life experience had been narrowed to the immediate present, without past or thought of future. He raised his eyes and slowly surveyed his environment. As he did so his mouth opened, his arms lifted and his whole body proclaimed the wonder that possessed him. He saw himself in a great upper room, sumptuously furnished with rich hangings, rare skins and rugs, gilded divans, crescent-shaped chairs, and richly inlaid tables. Soft pillows and cushions lay upon the couches. Costly vases, of Roman and Grecian design, graced the tables. The many windows, opened wide, let in a flood of sunlight, and through them he saw the deep blue of the cloudless sky beyond. Numerous doors led from the room, and he saw himself standing near one that opened upon a balcony surrounding an inner

court, a *patio,* in which palms and flowering plants grew in dense profusion about a marble fountain that tossed its spray high into the sunbeams, through which it fell in a perpetual rainbow of vivid colors. Amid the foliage of the garden glistened choice marble statues of Venus, of Jupiter, and the reeling Bacchus.

He turned, open-mouthed and panting, again to the girl. He had not noticed before how beautiful she was. Her attire was that of the young Roman damsel of the middle class of that period. It impressed him, and so vividly that he glanced down at his own garb. Then he started back in astonishment. There was nothing in his thought against which to measure his environment, or the costume of the girl, or his own; yet *something* seemed to inform him that he had had experience of environments, attire, people, different, far different, from all this. But when, or where, he might not say. He saw himself clad now in a woolen tunic, embroidered, and tied at the waist with a brightly colored cord, with gilded tassels that fell at one side. His arms and legs were bare, but his feet were shod with sandals that laced about the ankles. The freedom with which he could move his limbs impressed him, although he had no recollection of their having been fettered in chains. He raised his arms again, and passed a hand over his brow.

"You are still dazed," he heard her say. "But stand you here and recover. I must leave you now, but I will return for you soon. Meantime, remember what I said; for if you are a follower of this Nazarene Jesus you are over bold to proclaim it here in Pilate's house. Nay, it is death! I would help you . . ."

He reached out suddenly and seized her arm. "Help me! . . . help me!" he cried in a voice that rang with agony. "I . . . I can . . . remember . . . *nothing!*"

"Oh!" she exclaimed, starting back. Then her look of fear gave place to one of great pity, and she drew near to him again. "You do not remember anything that happened yesterday, or before?" she asked in a tone of awe.

He shook his head sadly. She stood for a moment regarding him. Then: "But you remember whence you came to Jerusalem, and how Procula took you to be trained. . ."

"No, nothing. I do not even know my name. Oh, tell me who I am and why I am here! . . ." Tears burst suddenly from his eyes, and he bowed his head in his hands and sobbed.

"But do you not recall that you were bidden to wait here at the portal for me to come to lead you through the streets? No?" as he continued to shake his head. "Oh!" She paused and stood looking at him in mingled wonder and pity. Then

she laid a soft hand on his arm. "Procula will spare me now," she said gently, "and we will go. In the streets you will recover. Come."

He raised his head. "Where?" he asked brokenly.

"Why, through the city," she answered. "You are to be Procula's *nomenclator*, you know."

"Procula? *Nomenclator?*" he echoed. "What are these? And who am I?"

"Poor fellow! But it cannot last, so come, I will tell you as we go, and perchance it will all return to you as I talk."

She led him, half blind with his tears, out through the door and down the long balcony to a flight of stone steps, thence down to the lower corridor, and through other doorways and passages until at length they emerged upon the narrow street. He moved as in a dream, now sorrowing, now stirred by wonder, now shrinking in terror, struggling, striving, grasping at every thought that entered his mentality for some clue to it all, some concept that he might recognize, some link that would complete the broken chain of memory and unite him again with what had gone before.

"You remember the name of the house we have just left?" she queried, glancing up at him curiously, yet tenderly. "No? Why, it is Herod's palace; and Pontius Pilate, the Roman procurator, occupies it when in Jerusalem. When memory returns you will know that he is up here for the Feast of Tabernacles. You see, O my Crassius . . ."

"Crassius!" he exclaimed, halting. "Is that . . . is that my . . . what they call me?"

"Poor, poor fellow! Yes. Though you are a Jew, yet you bear a Roman name. You know, do you not, that you are a . . . slave?"

He stared down at her. "Slave!" he repeated in a hoarse whisper.

She nodded, and her face wore a look of great sadness. "You were sold to a Roman slaver in Azzah—but I do not know when. You were sold because of your poverty and . . ." Her voice fell, and she hesitated. "They said," she resumed in a hushed tone, "that you stole a man's property and slew his sick wife—but I cannot believe that—oh, no!"

He swayed under her words. She threw out a hand and caught his arm. "Come," she said, "let us get out of this narrow, stuffy street."

He turned with her, and together they threaded the constricted road, crowding against the buildings at times to permit great lumbering camels to pass, dodging through masses of people here, halting to avoid a litter there, and all the while

the girl continued her explanation to her stumbling, bewildered, uncomprehending companion.

"You were bought for Pilate," she went on, "for they said that, though a Jew—and I believe you are not a Jew, although an Israelite, for the dealer said you were of the tribe of Benjamin—they said you worshiped the Roman gods, and in particular Fortuna, the goddess of the good things of earth. But . . ." She glanced up at him quizzically. "If you acknowledge the claims of the Nazarene you must believe that the gods of Rome are false. Do you so believe? Tell me, for I will not betray you."

He remained silent, staring hard at the road before him as he walked. She waited for a moment, then continued. "It was said by John of the Boanerges, and only the third evening back, that the Roman gods were not real beings, but human qualities, and he called them pride, and will, and love of riches, and lust, and human might. So, O Crassius, if you worship these, then are you doubly a slave indeed!"

Their progress was interrupted at this juncture by the approach of a body of Roman soldiers, led by a centurion. The officer threw a glance of recognition at the girl which her companion caught. "The soldiers are preparing for riots among the Jews," she explained, as she followed the centurion with her gaze. "This Jesus has stirred them up, and in particular the slaves, for he teaches that the truth will make them free. . ."

"The truth!" The words broke from him involuntarily.

"Ah, see how it affects a slave!" she exclaimed. "No wonder Pilate looks for trouble. But, come. And, as I was about to say, Procula, Pilate's wife, had need of a *nomenclator,* and, of course, none but a handsome one, and so she bade the overseer find her one, and he chose you."

"But . . . a *nomenclator?*"

"Ah, your poor memory! But it will come back, my Crassius, I know. A *nomenclator,* you will soon recall, is a slave who accompanies his master through the streets and gives him the names of such persons as he ought to recognize. Procula has a wretched memory, and must needs depend upon a *nomenclator* when she goes about the city. And you are given into my charge to train for that office, for I know everyone here. Do you not recall it now?"

"Nothing," he answered sadly.

"You remember naught of yesterday?" she resumed, again looking at him wonderingly. "Will you perchance to-morrow recall naught of to-day? But if that continue, then will you perforce live but a day at a time. And yet," she went on, as

if in musing, "it is somewhat akin to that which John tells us the Nazarene teaches, for he bids us take no thought for the morrow."

He turned to her. "Who is this John?" he asked.

"A disciple of the Nazarene Jesus," she replied. "And . . . But see, there is Kem," she whispered, indicating with her hand a short, stout man who was approaching. "Mark him well, O Crassius, for Procula must needs recognize him, an Egyptian and a rich physician. Now, as I was saying, John talked with some of the slaves . . ."

He interrupted her with a gesture. "Tell me," he said, "are you a . . . a slave, too?"

She shook her head. "No," she answered. "I am free-born. My father, Jesse, an Israelite of great learning but small means, contracted me to Pilate, but on condition that I serve none but Procula, who had need of one to be her eyes and read to her in Greek and Hebrew, and sing, and dance, to while away her hours of troubled conscience. I am safe under Pilate's protection; my father was doubly wise to secure that. And so I come and go freely and in honor. But . . ." She paused and looked up at him. Then she went on. "I am there for some purpose, I am persuaded, although what it is has not as yet been revealed. Perchance it has to do with . . . Ah, well, who can say? Perchance it has to do with you, O Crassius—for your great need has stirred me deeply. I was drawn to you when first I beheld you, and I would help you. Yet, if you stoned the teacher, and he be the Christ . . . But you say you know not what drove you to that mad deed. You do not remember seeing him at the gate?"

He shook his head. "I remember nothing," he repeated wearily.

"He was with you and you saw him not. I think it strange," she said thoughtfully. "I think it naught but necromancy that blinded you and caused you to hurl stones at him," she pursued. "You did not know, for ignorance darkened your mind. And yet, if what he teaches be the truth, he can make you free, for he does astounding things . . . why, they report that in Galilee he even raised the dead. . . But that passes all belief."

"Does he . . . does he free the . . . slaves?"

"They say he has set free many who were bound by disease," she answered. "And John says that slavery is of the mind. . . But what he means by that, I cannot say. There is somewhat strange about the teachings of this Nazarene, O Crassius, for he deals not at all with things material -indeed, they say that matter disappears under his magic touch, or by

the same deft touch expands to unheard-of size. They say," her voice fell to a whisper, "that with a few loaves and fishes he fed some thousands. Procula is sore distraught. She quizzes me much. I can only tell her what I have heard John say, for I have not as yet beheld this Jesus, although he has been teaching nearly three years."

"Where may I find him?" His voice was low and tense.

"That I cannot say, O Crassius. But in our walks about the city we are most like to meet him. What then? Would you pray him to set you free? But think, O my Crassius! For if he loose a slave from bondage then would the act incite a riot. The Roman soldiers would descend upon us, and . . ."

"I shall beg him to set me free."

She walked along beside him in silence for a few moments. Then she looked up at him again. "The Roman Seneca has said, O Crassius, that the only liberty is wisdom. But wisdom, my father says, is knowing truth and conforming to it. Now the Nazarene teaches that a knowledge of truth will make men free. Then is not your freedom to be found in understanding and applying the teachings of this Jesus?"

"I shall beg him to set me free," was the repeated answer.

She did not speak for some time. Then, of a sudden, she gave a little cry. "Behold, O Crassius, that man . . . there, by the wall. It is John! And he of the heavy beard and broad shoulders? Ah, that must needs be the one called Peter. Come, O my Crassius, we will ask them to lead us to him who claims to be the Christ!"

CHAPTER 13

SPURRED by the girl's words, he bounded forward eagerly, now oblivious of all but self; but ere he reached the two men a crowd had begun to gather, and he and his fair companion found themselves barred from access to them.

"Stand we here, O Crassius," he heard the girl say; "if there be a riot, we were well on the outside."

They halted, and stood watching and listening attentively. A loud murmuring rose from the people as they pressed around the two erstwhile fishermen, but it was not entirely a manifestation of disapproval. "Where is *he*?" was voiced insistently. And with the question came a varied comment. "He is a good man," some said. "Nay," contended others loudly; "but he deceiveth the people!" And yet others: "He calleth himself Christ! Do the rulers know this?" "Yea, we know whence

this man is, but when Christ cometh, no man knoweth whence *he* is!"

"But," came in a bold voice, "when Christ cometh will he do more miracles than these which this man hath done?"

At that moment a pompous figure, clad in a plain white garment overwrapped by gorgeously colored abnets in many folds, approached and began to force a way through the throng. "A priest," whispered Miriam. The people fell quickly back when they recognized the office of the newcomer, who presently halted, and, surveying the assemblage with a haughty mien, loudly demanded: "Why have ye not brought him? I would hear him speak."

A short interval of silence followed. Then a man who appeared to have authority answered: "Never man spake like this man!"

The priest's brow clouded. "What," he exclaimed, "are ye also deceived? Have any of the rulers or of the Pharisees believed on him? How say you, O Nicodemus?" he added, singling out for his question a man standing near the disciple John, and wearing the unmistakable garb of a Pharisee of distinction.

The one addressed hesitated, and glanced uneasily from the disciples to the priest. Then he forced a cautious answer. "Doth our law judge any man before it hear him and know what he doeth?" he said.

The priest's lip curled. "But *you* have heard him," he replied, "though you chose the cover of night. How would you answer the Sanhedrin, were they to demand of you what he taught?"

All turned to Nicodemus. His face went white, and for a moment there was a look of fear in his eyes. Then he straightened up and replied boldly: "I would answer: He taught me that I must be born again."

A murmur came from the people. A short, mocking laugh broke from the priest. "How then will you explain such deep wisdom?" he sneered.

Nicodemus stood silent, hesitating. The people pressed nearer in keen expectancy. Then a tall man, with fair locks and blue eyes, who had been standing close to John, came forward and confronted the priest.

"Ah," cried the latter, as his eyes fell upon him, "Gaius, the learned Ephesian! How now, philosopher, would ye interpret this Nazarene's subtle words?"

"I interpret them," boldly answered he that was called Gaius, "as second to the profoundest wisdom ever uttered by man."

"Second?"

"Even so," continued Gaius; "for the greatest wisdom, which was also uttered by this same man, is that *God is Spirit.* For, God being of infinite magnitude, if He be Spirit it must logically follow that there is naught else that is real."

The priest fell back with open mouth. "Naught else that is *real!*" he exclaimed. "God of our fathers! Did not He create the heavens and the earth?"

"Even so," returned Gaius calmly. "But, according to this Jesus, the heavens and the earth are not what ye think them. For, if ye will follow logic, even as he does, then ye must admit that, if Spirit be all, there can be naught of reality in things material. Nay, further: if ye will faithfully pursue logic ye must admit that sin and all its fell consequences hath its sole origin in the things we call material. But, these latter being unreal, because of Spirit's allness, it doth most logically follow that evil hath its origin in that which is unreal. Therefore, O Priest, the Nazarene hath shown himself profoundly wise and truly logical in calling evil a lie—hath he not? But, further, a lie is of the mind. It is a thing of men's thought. And so, when this Galilean teacher did inform our Nicodemus that he must be born again, what meant he but that he must acquire a new mind, a new manner of thinking, even as John Baptist cried in the wilderness: '*Metanoia!* Ye must have a complete and radical change of thought'?"

Before the priest could retort voices were heard from the outskirts of the multitude. A woman was seen pressing forward eagerly and crying: "Where may I find him? Oh, if I could but touch the hem of his robe!"

"The answer to thine unvoiced words, O Priest," said Gaius boldly, pointing to the woman.

The priest stood with mouth agape, with eyes flaming and fists clenched. He gasped and made as if to speak; but at that moment the crowd abruptly began to disperse. Miriam and her companion, looking back, saw a troop of Roman soldiers approaching along the narrow thoroughfare. The priest threw a disdainful glance at the soldiers, then turned in silence and walked discreetly away. The people scattered quickly. The two disciples started slowly down the road, accompanied by Nicodemus and the Ephesian Gaius. The slave Crassius, his thought bursting with what he had heard, followed after them, with Miriam holding to his arm.

"Thou seest, Johanan," they heard Gaius say, as they walked close behind the four, "that the teachings of the Master, which came to me through thee, have borne fruit. But it was not until, after much reflection, I had resolved them all into their primal element that I became persuaded. How indeed

could he perform such wonders if what we call materiality be real? And in this I but expand the thought of Plato, who likewise deduced the mighty fact that ideas were the sole reality. . ."

"Yet your philosopher failed to do any wondrous works," the apostle replied.

"True. And why? Even because he knew not how to make his deductions practical. But, more: he did not work from the basis of the One God, who is Spirit, as does the Master. Ah, *there* is the difference! Plato believed all things to be mental; but, unlike Jesus, he attributed power to evil. I see! I see! A fountain cannot send forth both sweet and bitter water. And now I apprehend the Master's thought when he taught you that as a man thinketh so is he. For, look you, Johanan, it has ever been my notion that, in some profoundly wondrous manner, our thinking doth result in deeds, and circumstances, and things we call environment, and objects that we think composed of matter. In other words, all things external to ourselves result from thought. What then? A man is good or bad, miserable or happy, sick or well, according to the way he thinks. Am I not right? Say now, what says the Master on this point?"

The apostle sighed. "That he hath still many things to tell us, but we cannot bear them yet," he answered low.

"Ah!" the Greek exclaimed in satisfaction. "It is even so! But now," he continued eagerly, "hast heard him say aught of what we are pleased to call our senses? Of sight, of hearing, and of touch? I am most inquisitive to know; for, O Johanan, I have ever held with the wisest of the Greek philosophers that we do not see, nor hear, nor feel things of matter, but only that which forms the content of our minds. And what is that but thought?"

"Eyes have ye, but ye see not; and ears ye have, but ye hear not. . ."

"*Eureka!* It is the wisdom of God! And God, O Johanan, to the clearest Greek logician is pure Mind. Then what is man?"

"He teaches that we are the sons of God. And that he is like unto the Father."

The Greek bowed his head in deep meditation. Then he looked up. "His point is none but this: we are not what we to each other and ourselves do seem, but the real nature of us every one is like unto the Christ. O friend, this Jesus—I say it in the greatest awe—has himself been changing these many years, changing, changing, under the dissolvent of thought divine, until what you privileged disciples now behold in him is the Jesus of Nazareth become Jesus the Christ. So, he teaches,

must we every one similarly change. Great God divine! what light hath this man brought into a world benighted. And now, one last point, and I have done. When confronted by those consuming with disease, he saith . . ."

"He saith: 'Fear not', or, 'Only believe'," the disciple answered for him.

The Greek nodded. "So you have told me. And I have studied well these words to probe them for their meaning. What then? We are not things of matter—perish forever such baleful notion! We are mentalities, minds, if you will. And our activity is the activity of our thought. The result of this is what men are pleased to call our *consciousness*. The Master has said: 'Be ye therefore perfect'. What meant he? To me, this: Be ye therefore conscious of naught but good. But, ye ask, can we change our consciousness? Even so, I say, and by changing our thought. The activity of right thought produces the perfect consciousness, the perfection which the Master bids us strive for as for naught else. 'Only believe,' he saith. Only *understand*, only *know*. And then he adds those words of deepest wisdom: That to know God is life eternal. Ah, Johanan, the Messiah is come! God Himself is among us, and we know it not!"

At this juncture Peter turned and beheld Miriam and the slave close upon his heels. He stopped. "Whom seek ye?" he asked in a brusque voice. At his words his companions likewise halted and turned. Instantly John's eyes lighted and a smile wreathed his mouth. Miriam returned the smile, and would have drawn closer to him, had not the slave Crassius brushed her aside and forced himself before her.

"Where is this man?" he demanded. "I would have him make me free."

The four men looked at the slave in astonishment. Then John spoke, and his voice was low and tender. "Why seek ye him? Is it for the kingdom . . .?"

"No! no! no! I seek my freedom! Only my freedom! Nothing else!"

"But such as ye shall seek and find not," the apostle answered.

"He desires but the loaves and fishes," said Gaius.

"Look ye," cried Peter roughly, "ye are of Pilate's household. The slave bears his mark. Ye are spies. Begone!"

"Of Pilate's household, yes," said John gently; "but not spies. The child seeks the Christ. . ."

"But not for myself," Miriam interrupted eagerly, "but for him," taking the slave's hand. Her eyes shone, and her face was aglow.

The disciple John looked down upon her tenderly. "And ye shall find the Christ," he said in a soft voice. "So likewise shall the slave—but only when he shall seek for him with all his heart. . ."

"When he shall seek him without thought of self," the Greek murmured.

The slave's face darkened, and he stooped and took up a stone. The girl seized his arm and tried to draw him away. "Come," she said, "it grows late, and we must hasten back to Herod's palace."

"I will not!" he muttered sullenly. "I say, I will not! I will find this Jesus, and he shall set me free!"

Peter turned to John. "What shall we do?" he asked in perplexity.

"Love him," came the answer gently.

Peter shrugged his shoulders in manifest annoyance. "O, true. Thou ever sayest that. But what shall we do that is practical, now?"

"Love him," came again from John.

Slowly the slave's fingers relaxed, as his eyes looked deep into John's. The stone fell to the ground. His chest heaved, and a sob escaped him. He turned and, with Miriam still clinging to his arm, moved slowly away.

For some time his environment made no impress upon his thought, which had again become lethargic; and not until he heard Miriam exclaim did his mind awake.

"He may be in the Temple!" he heard her say in excited tones. "See, the porch of Solomon is thronged! Oh, come!"

A sense of his vast need returned upon him, and he bounded forward. A great assemblage of people was before him. Into it he dashed, and was swallowed up. Of Miriam, from whom he had become separated, he had no further thought. The press in which he found himself was tremendous, and composed of a heterogeneous mass of humanity. Of a sudden a shout fell upon his ears.

"How long dost thou make us to doubt? If thou be the Christ, tell us plainly!"

The babel of voices drowned whatever reply may have been made to this demand. Then a medley of cries and shouts arose. A man, clad as a Pharisee, who stood near him turned to a neighbor and said with a sneer: "Heardest thou the blasphemer? He said: 'I and my Father are one'!"

Loud cries then rent the air, and the multitude again surged forward. "For a good work we stone thee not!" he heard them shout; "but for blasphemy, and because that thou, being a man, makest thyself God!" Those about him took up stones and be-

gan to hurl them. Crassius, the slave, was seized with a similar desire. With the rest he shouted and blasphemed, then dashed forward with them to apprehend some one, he knew not whom.

But then, with the rest, he halted, as if jerked violently back. The tumult abruptly died, and a deep silence fell upon the multitude. Then he heard a voice, saying in awe: "He hath escaped out of our hands!"

He turned and fled away. As he weaved about among the excited people he was brought to a stop by the words of a man whom he saw engaged in earnest conversation with a small group. "We told him we were of Abraham's seed, and were never in bondage to any man," he heard him say. "But he set forth that the one who sins is in bondage. He said that if we were Abraham's children then would we do the works of Abraham. But, I ask, in what works of Abraham are we remiss?"

"His greatest," answered a man standing near the group, and who had overheard the query.

"And that, friend?"

"Simple obedience to the demand of God that we shall have no other gods before Him," was the answer.

"What gods have we before Him?"

"Lust, pride, intolerance, hatred of your fellow men, belief in the power of evil, and love of this world and its fleeting things of matter."

Crassius turned and again saw the Greek Gaius. He started toward him; but his feebly functioning thought was diverted by the approach of another group who were busily questioning a young man in their midst.

"Whether the man be a sinner or no, I know not," he heard the young man say; "one thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, *now* I see."

"Verily, I know the secret of the healing," the slave heard in a pompous voice. And looking about, he beheld the Egyptian physician, Kem, whom Miriam had pointed out but a short time before. "He anointed thine eyes with a certain clay in which he hath discovered marvelous medicinal virtue. Doubtless his spittle also containeth healing properties. Is it not so, friends?" appealing to the group.

"Of a certainty!" they cried. "Or else he heals by Beelzebub!"

"But whither hath he fled now?" asked one.

"It is reported he hath been seen going in the direction of Bethany."

"Then let us follow. Perchance we may confound the fellow in further necromancy." They turned as one and moved away rapidly. Crassius stood for a moment, striving desperately to correlate his thought. Then he started up and stumbled after them.

CHAPTER 14

HOUR after hour lagged slowly through the ruined Tower of Antonia. Marian sat waiting, not idly, but with incessant labor to clarify, to purify, her thought, that its activity might produce a consciousness of good and not of evil. And as she sat thus, the shafts of self-pity, self-condemnation, self-righteousness fell hissing around her. Impatience, fretfulness, fear, rebellion, all urged their heavy claims upon her; yet she sat waiting, one mental hand clasping the Father's, the other clinging to the pulseless hand of the man, once accounted rich, but now lying so pitiably poor and stricken before her. "It is God who owns these waiting hours," she would often murmur. "It is He who is holding us here. We cannot go on until we have learned our lesson."

Yet it was not the horrors of war that burned into her quivering soul; it was not the desperate wounding of Cragg; it was not their captivity at the hands of Otto Hoeffel, portentous as that now appeared; it was, rather, the stupendous fact, flaming upon her like living fire, that the spiritual demand for demonstration had been made, and that she was now called upon to prove the worth of that which, from the tutelage of Madam Galuth and through her own study and conviction, she had accepted and boldly voiced as Truth. It was but the age-old demand that, sooner or later, comes upon all mankind.

Again, much later in the day, Major Hoeffel returned to the waiting girl. She knew he would—knew, indeed, that her testing now would come in a manner that her wildest fancy, her weirdest imaginings, could not have outlined in Crestelridge, and through this man. She knew that she must fortify herself for a struggle that loomed before her Goliath-huge; for she had sensed the despair that was closing around his barren life, the despair that makes men slay and maim, and that drives to reckless abandon, to frenzied slaughter of body and soul. She knew that he typified tired humanity, seeking his own material concept of good, yet finding that concept falsely turning to ashes as he grasped it. She knew that he, that Alden, Crestelridge, the world, had been led far, far astray by these mesmeric concepts in the guise of good; knew that they could be no longer satisfied with "enticing words of man's wisdom," but only by convincing demonstration "of the Spirit and of power". She knew now that by the words she had uttered should she be condemned or justified; and Alden with her, for she had driven him before her into the furnace that now engulfed them both.

She knew as she sat that day at his bedside that the accumulated beliefs of ages of mortal thinking were pitted against her —knew that in the impending bitter struggle she was humanly alone, helpless, unless that knowledge of the One God, the God of Abraham, the "Father" of Christ Jesus, were capable of demonstration by her. She had felt all that long day that her own hour of crisis had come—the hour that the patriarchs had met—the hour in which some, like Enoch, Elijah, had proved, in meeting it, that God is in very deed Life, and that He cannot be deprived of His manifestation. It was the hour that the Nazarene had met, when he drew the sharp fangs from the serpent of error and rendered them impotent. It is the hour of judgment that every soul shall face, when every human stay shall have failed, and the modes and potions of matter shall mock at those who have been wont to lean so confidingly upon them. . .

"So, he still lives!" the major exclaimed, his eyes on Cragg. "But what keeps him alive? For he was never strong." He looked quizzically from Cragg to the girl. "He . . . what is he to you, Marian? *Lieb' Gott!* he treated you like a servant in Crestelridge. And you a . . ." He checked himself abruptly. Then: "Ah, *Liebschen,* it is good to have you here! For, see, you are in my house . . . and yet I would not harm you. This English *Schwein* kicked you out; but I, Marian, *I* am German! You will learn that that means something to you."

She shook her head. "It means nothing to me, Otto," she said. "For *'all nations before Him are as nothing; and they are counted to Him less than nothing, and vanity'."*

"Ah, but *Gott* has shown the German people that they are His chosen!"

"Israel is the chosen of the Lord," she answered.

He broke into a laugh. "Well, if the Lord has chosen the Jews, then I don't think much of the choice!" he cried. "Look you: the Germans possess all science, all knowledge, and are destined to dominate the world, for they have shown that they deserve it, that it is their right because of their great progress."

"Their boasted progress is all material. What spiritual progress have they made?"

"What spiritual progress have the Jews made?"

"I am not speaking of the Jews, but of Israel. And Israel is he who wrestles with error and overcomes it and brings out the spiritual Man."

"Bah! *Gott* has shown, I tell you . . ."

"Evil has shown that it has found you German people a ready channel," she interposed. "Your ancestors were worshipers of Bel, the god of error. You are not German, but Assyrian, Otto."

He stared at her blankly for a moment. Then he smiled, an incredulous, tolerant, patronizing smile. "I love your queer notions, Marian," he said. "They are so refreshing. You shall tell them to Bergheim and Muller. *Lieb' Gott!* how I shall confound them with your philosophy, is it not so? They are such stubborn animals! But, tell me, my little prophetess, shall we be driven from Jerusalem?"

"Yes," she answered simply.

"*Lieb' Gott!*" he cried with a sudden burst of anger; "but for the deluded Arabs who are flanking the British, Allenby would never reach Jerusalem!"

"Ishmael is serving us well," she said. How different was this man's mood to-day! And how foreboding!

He looked at her oddly. "Ishmael?" he echoed.

"The Arabs are descended from Ishmael, son of Abraham," she elaborated. "History is repeating itself. It always does, for the human mind does not really progress, but only moves in a limited circle."

He had now regained self-control. Again he smiled. "Bah!" he said in a tone of deep disgust, "let Jerusalem fall. It is a leprous hole. Listen: the Imperial German Empire still lives. We shall yet sit where Britain sits. We shall give the world its laws and its religion. We shall dominate it with force. Thor has returned with his mighty hammer. *Gott strafe England!* We shall crush her, crush her, and her cowardly spawn, the Americans! I have in my possession information and plans that will cause the dismemberment of the unholy British Empire. *Gott strafe England!* There is no master in the realm but the German Kaiser! *Ach,* he is the master-mind, and I glory in him! And you shall, too, Marian, when you have become disillusioned, you shall, too!"

"No, Otto," she answered; "I shall never glory in mortal men, for that would be ascribing power to the human mind."

"Power is in the German mind, as expressed by the Kaiser."

"The mortal who is mesmerized into choosing Attila and the Huns as the model for his army manifests pitiable weakness."

"*Doch!* that symbolizes the irresistible power of the Kaiser's mind! You dull-wits don't understand!"

"There is no power in the Kaiser's mind, for it is filled with hatred and a haunting sense of spiritual poverty that is manifested in his lust of conquest that is guiding you German people to destruction."

"Hatred is strength! And you know it, for you Americans hate England, too; you show it in your annual Fourth of July celebrations that commemorate and perpetuate your hatred of her."

"Our Fourth of July commemorates our release, not from England, but from the tyranny of a Prussian king who ruled over Britain at that time," she said.

"Bah!" he returned lamely, "England has hypnotized you. As I told you, you need somebody to think for you."

"It is the German people who are hypnotized, Otto. They are blinded by the mesmerism of human personality. They are like the Israelites, who demanded a king to rule over them because they were too mentally inert and lazy and mesmerized by error to do their own thinking. So they cried out for a king that would judge them and go out before them and fight their battles for them. And, in spite of the tyranny and bondage that Samuel told them would follow such an autocracy, they insisted on giving their allegiance to a mortal king rather than to their God. So the German people have elected to worship mortal mind as expressed by their Kaiser, their General Staff, and their Professors. They have given themselves to the Hohenzollerns instead of to God. And they have become so hypnotized by the suggestions of their leaders that they readily consent to this war, consent to what must prove their utter ruin. Oh, Otto, what tremendous lessons this war has for us all! It is showing us in Germany's downfall how the human mind, steeped in matter, accepts and yields to the error that is eternally opposed to Truth and that is constantly suggested to it, until its ruin is accomplished."

"*Donnerwetter!* you still croak the ruin of the German nation? Perhaps so. But, I ask, will the ruin of seventy million people leave the rest of the world untouched?"

"It means world-ruin, unless the people will acquire a new mind," she answered.

"You cannot change the mentality of the world!"

"But the German mind was quite changed by forty years of intensive propaganda. So, by the right sort of education, the world-mind can be changed, and wars and evil, sickness, death itself, can be abolished. But that can come only when suicidal religions of hate and force give place to real Christianity, and that Christianity is widely demonstrated—not merely preached in the healing of the sick and the solving of humanity's problems, even to the raising of the dead."

"But we Germans are a Christian nation," he retorted stubbornly. "We are just as Christian as England or America. But even the greatest theologians preach force. Luther . . ."

"Oh, yes, Luther was an advocate of frightfulness," she parried. "He was trained to be a monk, and he believed that there could be no righteousness outside the Church, though his Church—a mere human system—was festering with corrup-

tion. Your false ideas of the State can be traced back to him. He said that his times were so wonderful that a prince could merit heaven better with bloodshed than another with prayer. Your Kaiser has not advanced beyond this. Nor has the nation that he has educated to believe as he does. The peasants in Luther's day wanted freedom from slavery. They wanted land, to which they were just as much entitled as the great princes. They wanted the right to fish from the streams. They wanted to be paid for their labor. They wanted to be dealt with as men, as human beings. But Luther called them insurgents, and said that they should be knocked down, strangled, stabbed —but not loved or helped. No, Luther was a reformer, and he did a great work, but he was not a real Christian. Nor is your nation of Lutherans Christian."

"You are hard on us, Marian," he said. "But it is because you voice the nasty British opinion of us, is it not? But just the same, you are in our power now—and England shall be. But for some inexcusable blunders—how in God's name we made them I can't say!—the whole world would be in our power this day."

"But what then?" she asked. "For you could not hold it there. There never has been any *real* overcoming by physical force; and this should have taught you that physical force is not power. I am *not* in your power, Otto, and you can do nothing to me."

Again he stared at her oddly for a moment; again a smile of incredulity curled his lips. "But what can you do, *Liebschen?*" he said mockingly.

She shook her head. "I can of mine own self do nothing," she replied; "yet for that very reason you can do nothing to me. That is my protection."

"Bah! we mouth words," he retorted rudely. Then he gave a short laugh and broke into a coarse chant of denunciation of his foes. "*Gott strafe England!*" he exclaimed when he had concluded the song. "Let me hear you say it, *Liebschen.*"

"But it would mean nothing for me to repeat your words, like a parrot, Otto, for in my heart I say: God *love* England! And God love Germany, too, for love only can solve the awful problems of the nations. The ancient Elamites chanted just such Hymns of Hate when they swooped down upon Abraham; but they only proved the wisdom of Buddha, who asked: 'If hate responds to hate, where shall hate end?' This world, Otto, is now being seen as the effect of the thoughts of its inhabitants. If they sow hate, hate shall they reap, and evil shall be supreme. If they sow love, then love shall they reap, and all its sweet concords. I used to tremble in Crestelridge when

I saw our people treat your Hymns of Hate so jokingly, for I knew that these were the outward expressions of organized evil that would, if unchecked, destroy the Word in human consciousness. I saw that every military 'drive' launched by the Germans was preceded by a deadly gas attack of mental suggestions directed to the Allies. Error always works that way, by clouds of aggressive suggestions of evil that so debilitate its victims that they have no spiritual strength left to meet the subsequent attack. It is evil's 'drives' that mankind must learn to check, 'drives' of envy, of hate, of greed, yes, and 'drives' of disease. God *love* England, I say! And Germany, and all peoples! For love alone can solve the awful problems of this war-torn world. But the one who hates cannot know love."

"Love! *Ach,* but I asked you for love, in Crestelridge; and you refused it me."

"I refused to marry you, Otto," she said gently, "but not to love you. For I do love you, in the right way, with a love that makes me want to help you overcome those false beliefs that are destroying you and the German people."

"Bah! what sort of love is that for a man, a soldier?"

"It is the sort of love that caused Jesus to give himself for his fellow men, here in this city. . ."

"He gave himself for a chimera! When I read about him I feel like a milksop, a namby-pamby—like Cragg here!"

"He gave up the human sense of life, gave up his carnal soul, his animal instincts, to prove that human existence is not Life at all. This is what I am trying to do . . . for Alden . . . for you. . ."

"But I prefer good human hate!" he interrupted.

"I cannot hate you," she answered low.

"*Gott in Himmel!* you shall love me, you shall!" he cried, leaning quickly toward her and snatching her hand. "I ask you again to marry me. Listen: I do not command, I *ask.* I love you, Marian. I brought you here, to my headquarters, to protect you. I will be good to you. *Ach,* Marian, I am starving for your love! Tell me!"

"I love you, Otto," she said, her voice trembling; "but not in your way."

"*Gott!* it shall be in my way! . . ."

She had risen, but she was unable to free her hand from his close grasp. He jerked her violently to him and threw an arm about her, just as the kitchen door opened noisily and the Egyptian stumbled across the threshold, dropping an earthenware dish that crashed into pieces upon the stone floor.

The major released the girl and flashed his angry eyes upon the Egyptian. "Zuleyka . . . you *cat!*" he snarled.

Then his anger came under his control, and he turned again to Marian, who stood, erect but pale, before him. "Forgive me, Marian," he said in a low, shaking voice. "Your beauty, your sweetness . . . *Ach*, it overcame me . . . and I am but human! You will forget? Yes?" He left her and went to the Egyptian, who was clumsily gathering up the fragments of the broken dish. For some moments he spoke rapidly with her, and in tones hardly above a whisper; then he came back to Marian. "She will take good care of you," he said gently. "If you have not what you wish, ask her." With which he again left the room.

The day closed upon such mental struggle as the girl had never known—not to overcome that which the world believes true, but merely to stand and hold the portals of her mentality closed against the aggressive hosts of carnal fear and hideous suggestion that stormed them. She felt a prescience of the major's return, and, as night drew about her and the Egyptian began to glide like a wraith, torch in hand, from candle to candle, she was not surprised to see him enter the room from the black corridor and advance toward her.

"I 'pologize," he began thickly. "I . . ." He came, swaying slightly and extending his hand. Marian fell back before him. His foot struck against Cragg's cot, and he scowled down at the still form. *"Schwein!"* he muttered.

Then he drew himself up and stood unsteadily. "I have neglected you, *mein Fräulein,"* he stammered, "but exi—exigencies o' war . . . But I'm come to take you out of this bat's cave. Give you an evening's pleasure . . . round th' city in my car, eh?"

Marian choked back a cry. He had been drinking deeply; a hellish mood was upon him; and again through his ill-fitting mask of urbanity she saw the marks of the beast. "I cannot go!" she gasped.

He caught her meaning, and laughed cynically. "Cragg, eh?" A sneer came into his face. "Bah! he is dead."

"No!"

He laughed again, shrugging his shoulders. "It is the same; he is not here; he will not return. Look! what is he to you, eh? You love him? Bah! then why do you not save him with your so interesting philosophy that you were so glib to tell everybody in Crestelridge? Is it that you cannot prove it true? . . . or because he kicked you out? Then why should you love him, eh? You are hypnotized!"

"I owe him my life," she answered tremulously.

"Eh?" He stood blinking and uncomprehending. "You owe *me* your life!" he snarled. "I have kept you from a Turk-

ish harem! You cannot leave Cragg, *hein?* But you shall leave him to-night, or I will have him shot!"

She staggered back as if struck a blow. He started toward her menacingly. She suppressed a scream and clasped her hands convulsively over her bosom. The Egyptian glanced in from the kitchen, but stepped quickly back and closed the door. The major seized the girl's arms. He drew her toward him. He glowered down at her. Then a cruel smile came into his face.

"You would rather he should die in peace than be shot, *nicht wahr?*" he insinuated.

Marian turned her head away. The room swam; she choked; her breath came in sobs. She looked down at Cragg. He did not appear to breathe. She looked toward the kitchen; but the door was closed. The few candles in the big room flickered fitfully in the thick gloom. Night, black, desolate, hopeless, was descending. . .

She raised her head. "I . . . I will go with you, Otto," she whispered hoarsely.

He crushed her to him. "*Ach,* little one, the *Herr Doctor* has given him up, and he shall die where he lies. . . And you shall leave this dirty hole. . . Come! . . ."

For hours that night the tired, hectored girl rode through tortuous streets of the ancient city, with the stupefied, babbling, maudlin creature swaying at her side—over the Mount of Olives, in the gleaming moonlight that filtered among the ancient trees of Gethsemane and formed into an image of the kneeling Christ—and now the major's arm lay about her neck, and now his head rested upon her shoulder while his drugged senses slept—and when the impatient chauffeur saw that his master was insensible he drove back to the Tower and bore him to his bed, while the girl sped to the Egyptian, who stood at the arched portal awaiting her, and was led back into the echoing prison.

Again at Cragg's side, Marian sank upon the stool and bowed her head. The Egyptian came creeping softly to her. "You are a woman, of an ambulance corps," the girl heard her say. "He should send you back. He has no right to hold you." Marian reached out and took her hand. "*Bon Dieu!*" the woman exclaimed; "but you have courage, little one! But strengthen yourself, for he has only begun. Poof! if you were but ugly, like me, he would send you to the American colony. They have a hospital down by the Jaffa gate . . . you passed it when you came in. There are ninety Americans . . . but Jamal Pasha says they must be deported, because Falkenhayn commands it. But you will remain with the major, for he has

great influence with Jamal Pasha and with Enver." She paused and glanced furtively around the big room. Then she quickly extracted something from a hidden pocket of her dress and held it out to the girl. "Here, *ma chérie*," she said softly.

Marian raised her head and looked up into the woman's face, then down at the object in the brown hand. "What is it?" she asked.

"Poison. It gives painless death. You will need it. The major will come again."

Marian gasped. Then she rose wearily and drew the stool over to the side of Cragg's cot and sank down again, leaving the Egyptian with a curious smile on her wrinkled face and the vial still extended in her hand.

CHAPTER 15

AGAIN in the shrouded hours of another night, after a day of ominous quiet, Marian sat beside the stricken man whom she had forced out to grapple with problems far beyond his feeble spiritual strength. He lay quiescent; yet he lived, though sentenced by mortal laws to die. And the girl knew, as she sought to withhold her eyes from the still form, that only as she could rise above the personal sense of things would the demonstration of God as Life be possible to her. And she knew, too, that in this alone lay her own deliverance.

Toward midnight the major entered, not alone, but accompanied by an officer wearing the insignia of chaplain. "Please pardon," he said to the girl who quickly rose and stood to receive him, "but the British are keeping us very busy and I had no other time to bring my friend Muller. Let me present him. He is chaplain."

The major's companion bowed stiffly, with a perfunctory murmur of conventional courtesies.

"He has been imploring me to bring him," the major resumed, his eyes snapping, "for I had told him of you and of our life in Crestelridge. And, besides," giving the chaplain a dig with his elbow, "our good preacher has lived many years in New York, and he much admires the American women, is it not so, Muller? But, come, we will go upstairs, to my apartments, and Zuleyka will make the coffee and serve a mouthful. *Himmel!* this cellar is no place for you, Marian . . . but you prefer to remain here while Alden lives, no? It will not be long. But, come. And you, Zuleyka . . ."

The Egyptian, who had sat huddled and invisible in a dark

corner of the great room, rose and shuffled to Marian's side. The girl turned and looked for a moment into the woman's black eyes; then she glanced down at Cragg. Her breath came quickly. Yet no other way had opened but this, and she would take it.

"And he still lives?" she heard the major say. "*Lieb' Gott!* what holds him here? He should be dead by now!"

Through an exit at the rear of the room, and along a damp stone corridor and up a long, narrow, winding flight of steps, Marian followed the major and his companion, with the Egyptian close behind her. The major's apartments lay slightly above the street level, with windows that gave upon the storied Via Dolorosa. They were sumptuously furnished, especially the brilliantly lighted little inner room that evidently served him as study and *sanctum*, and to which he led his party. "It was the Pasha's favorite lounging place," he said, sweeping the cosy little room with a gesture. "We had to throw him out. They say Pilate's Judgment Hall once occupied this site. It was that," he explained, addressing himself to Marian, "that set my friend Muller and me to quarreling this evening, and forced me to get you to help me whip him. But be seated." He turned and gave a few instructions to the Egyptian, and when she had departed, he resumed: "By the way, Marian, have no fear for Alden: I instructed the guard to go in and sit by him while you were away."

He dropped into the deep cushions of a divan and lighted a cigarette. Marian sank down in a stiff little chair, gilded and ornate. The chaplain seated himself beside the major and sat dully studying the girl.

"You see," the major continued briskly, "you have predicted the fall of Jerusalem, Marian, and the chaplain probably thinks you are concealing some war secret that we should have. But there is nothing to that, for you made the same prediction to Penberry, of course, and he acted on it and . . . well, whether through his influence or not, the Palestine campaign has been resumed rather contrary to our expectations. The Intelligence Service, Muller, is much more alive than your musty old religious department. And," again addressing Marian, "you have called us Assyrians. Also, nothing, for we are called Huns, and are proud of it. But you have said that we are a godless people. Muller will resent that, for I know he believes in the Lord God of the Garden. And I am an admirer of Thor. Now Muller has not said so, but I am certain he longs to save your soul; for, while you consider him godless, he regards you as a heretic, is it not so, Muller?" He broke into a laugh.

Marian's face flushed. How had these men discussed her?

They had brought her up here to be mocked! Whatever the chaplain's genuine sentiment, she knew that the major now was making low sport of her. But so had the rabble mocked and scourged the one who had sought to reveal Truth on that same spot twenty centuries before. . .

"And another thing," the major resumed, bending forward and affecting to speak confidentially, "the chaplain is a coward about death. . . There, Muller," as the chaplain attempted to voice a protest, "you have asked a thousand times since you came here: If a man die, shall he live again? You're afraid to die; but I'll wager this girl is not, are you, Marian?"

She raised her head. Her cheeks were pale, but her thought was now calm. This was not her battle, but Alden's; it was his life that she fought for, not her own. "No," she said quietly.

"But why?" the major pursued. "Tell Muller why."

She braced herself. She had pitched by her standard. There she would remain. "God is Life," she replied in a low voice. "He is infinite and eternal; therefore there can be no death." Though they jested, yet would she speak truth.

"Good!" the major exclaimed. "Simple and logical, once we admit your premise. But I am an atheist."

Marian's thought flashed back to her talk with Ted Sayor on the night of the Cragg ball. And her reply was a repetition of the one she had given to the rich young man. "No one is ever really an atheist. Everybody knows that there is a higher power of some sort."

"Sure! I am conscious of powers greater than myself: force, energy, and so on. But Muller here is a dull-wit; he must deal only with facts that rise up and hit him in the face, things elemental, self-evident. Start over, so's he can follow, eh, Muller?"

Marian sat for a moment looking down at the soft, rich rug on the floor. Was she bidden to *teach* these Assyrians, her captors? Did her life—Alden's—perhaps theirs—depend on *her?* The task loomed insuperable; yet it was hers. "Through fear and trembling" she had been commanded to work out her own salvation; who knew that she might not thereby also work out that of her oppressors? *"He that is perfect in knowledge is with thee,"* ran through her thought. It was an angel visitant.

She drew a deep sigh and looked up at the major. "There is for all mankind but one self-evident fact," she said slowly, "and that is consciousness. We are all conscious of existence. . ."

"Like Descartes: *'I think, therefore I am'*," the major put in. "Go on."

"Even apart from the testimony of the five physical senses," she continued, "every man knows that he is conscious. And he believes himself conscious of living in a material world; yet a little reflection shows that this world exists for him only as a series of changing states of consciousness. He is conscious, or aware, of being subjected with this world to the government of invisible, intangible things which he calls laws. He is conscious of powers beyond himself. . ."

"Sure!" the major again interrupted. "And those powers —perhaps there is only one—are manifested everywhere, all over the world, and in the moon, and the planets, and the sun, and even millions of miles away in the most distant stars, eh? And the power that is manifested is an intelligent power. It seems to know what to do. We might call it mind, eh? And it seems to have no limits. Omnipresent, eh? We don't see it directly, but we are aware of its existence through its expression. And its expression is both good and bad for us; it may create—we don't know—but it certainly does destroy. To-day it seems good and kind; to-morrow it is the devil himself! What say, Muller?"

The chaplain shifted his staring eyes from the girl to the major. "Theology teaches that there are two opposing powers," he answered deliberately: "one, God, who is good, and the other, Satan, the evil fallen angel, whom God will eventually overcome."

The major turned with a grin to Marian. He was hugely enjoying the prospect of a combat of wits. "Here's where you've got him, Marian," he chuckled. "For evil and good are opposites, just like plus and minus. God can't be infinite if He has an opposite; and there can't be two infinite opposites; so good and evil must both be limited. Then what becomes of the theologian's good God, eh?"

The girl looked at him searchingly for a moment, then made answer. "That which men call good," she said, "is only the human mind's limited concept of good. Even the human mind's highest concept of good is far, very far from the real Good. Yet it is better than its concept of evil. Human beings are conscious of the presence and activity of mind, of thought; and in all their conscious experience, which they call life and which is the result of thought, they believe themselves to be conscious both of that which is good and that which is evil. They are conscious of a universe of direct opposites, such as life and death, health and sickness, harmony and discord, joy and sorrow, good and evil, mind and matter. Everything of which mortals are conscious has its direct opposite, of which they are equally conscious. One destroys the other in perpetual combat. So

the human consciousness is a house divided against itself. For that reason its endurance is limited. What we are conscious of, we believe to be real and true; but the strain of trying to be conscious of direct opposites, and of trying to believe them both to be true, becomes too much for mortals, and they give up and cease to be conscious of anything. They die."

"H'm!" the major commented; "then they don't die of diseases and wounds, eh? I ought to have brought Bergheim. He's a doctor."

"The things that mortals believe to be real are outwardly manifested to them," she answered. "Men ascribe their discords to various things which they believe to exist outside of themselves and which they call evil. But in reality men kill themselves with their thinking. Consciousness is mental activity, the activity of thought. It is the result of thinking. What we shall be conscious of, therefore, depends on what we think and believe to be true. The closer we approach to Truth in our thinking, the more harmonious and enduring is the state of our consciousness."

"But where are the things, the objects, that we are conscious of?" he demanded.

"They are within us," she replied. "We are conscious of only the things that are within our minds. But the things within our minds can only be mental things—matter, as solid lumps of stuff, cannot enter our minds. How would it get there? Through the eyes? the ears? the sense of touch? No; we are conscious of nothing but the content of our minds, and that is entirely mental."

"So matter is mental, eh?"

"Yes, to us it is a mental concept."

"But what do you mean when you say you are conscious of a thing?" he pursued. "You are conscious of me here; but what does that means to you?"

"In saying that I am conscious of a thing I mean that my thought is active with regard to it," she answered readily. "I say that I see you, and that I am conscious of you. Yet I am conscious only of my mental concept of you, the mental image which my thought forms within what I call my mentality. I do not see *you,* but am only aware of a mental image which I call you. The same thoughts of you will always form the same mental image or concept; but changing thoughts of you will form differing concepts. Yet all of them I call *you.* There are the human beliefs that, as time passes, you will grow old, will become broken, sick. These thoughts coming to me, and being accepted by me as true, will form altered concepts of you in my mentality; and all of these concepts I call *you.* Yet not

one of them is the real *you*. And so human life is only a series of states of consciousness, or awareness, of mental activities and mental concepts formed of fleeting, changing thoughts that approximate to, or recede very far from, actual unchanging Truth."

"H'm! And where do these thoughts come from? From God?"

"No, for only true thoughts can come from the Mind that is God; and these material thoughts that form into material concepts within our mentalities are not true, but counterfeit. They come from what may be called the 'communal mortal mind', which is itself the counterfeit, or suppositional opposite, of the One Mind, God."

The major turned to the chaplain. *"Lieb' Gott,* Muller," he cried, "there is tough food for your gizzard, eh? We are not aware of *things,* but of mental concepts or *images* of things; and the way these images shall look to us depends on whether they are based on truth or its opposite, eh? Its opposite we call, in philosophy, error. But the one seems to be just as real as the other, *nicht wahr?"* turning again to Marian.

"But the real, according to the philosopher Spencer, is that which does not pass away. All of our human concepts are continually passing away: material objects alter in appearance, and finally decay into dust; matter changes from one element into another, and is now known to actually disappear; men change and die . . ."

"And yet," he interrupted, "material objects and people, like the leaves and the grass, are always being created anew."

"In constantly altering forms," she gave answer. "And some of the older forms have disappeared, not to return. As human beliefs change, so the concepts in human consciousness change. A decided change for the worse in material thinking manifests in great epidemics, in calamities, in devastating wars. It is conceivable that the human race might become quite extinct—even as certain animal species have become extinct—by thought becoming more densely material and so manifesting its increased knowledge of material modes of destruction as to cause it to destroy itself. It is attempting self-destruction to-day. Because the human mind is erroneous, it is bound to be a suicide."

"But what would remain then?"

"Truth, which cannot be destroyed."

"But how did the error come? How did it get a start? Which was first?"

"Two things opposite to each other cannot both be true. Truth and its opposite, error, cannot both be primal, any more

than both can be true. But Truth must of necessity exist. And it must be primal. If error were primal, then there would be no way of proving it false. But a negation cannot be primal: there must first be that of which it is the negative. If Truth is primal, then it proves error to be untrue. From the primal Truth necessarily comes all that is true and real. Since Truth is primal, and therefore cannot express itself in error, error can have no reality, unless Truth is limited and possible of extinction. The error that five and five are twelve is never real. The truth that five and five are ten is primal. The error follows as a negation, and could not have even a claim of existence but for the primal and real existence of Truth. The error is in this case a *suppositious opposite*. Now multiply this simple case by infinity, and we have the universal situation: Truth, primal and everywhere present; error, the suppositional opposite, appearing to follow and claiming to be just as true. The troubles of humanity have come from the futile attempt to accept both Truth and error, both good and evil, as real and primal. The result has been chaos and death."

"*Himmel!*" the major exclaimed, "but that I too have been a student of philosophy, I could not follow you! But I know your Emerson: he says that the only real is the spiritual, eh? And the English Spencer, he put forth the statement that there can be no unreality, or counter-fact, unless there is a reality, a fact, to be contradicted. And he is right. He said that all human knowledge is relative, but that every one of the arguments by which the relativity of human knowledge is demonstrated distinctly postulates the existence of something beyond the relative. We cannot conceive of human knowledge, which is demonstrably only a knowledge of appearances, or mental concepts, as you have said, without at the same time conceiving a reality of which it is the appearance. Every positive notion, or the concept of a thing by what it is, suggests a negative notion, the concept of a thing by what it is not. But, though these mutually suggest each other, the positive alone is real. This is what Spencer called the 'Theory of Suppositional Opposites'."

"A theory no longer," said Marian, "but a demonstrated fact."

"Demonstrated?" the major queried, lifting his brows.

"Yes. For when we deny the seeming, or that which to human sense appears to be real, it disappears and gives place to that which is more real."

The major sat reflecting for a moment. Then he tossed his cigarette aside and looked up at the girl. "Do you deny," he asked, "that Cragg is dying down there?"

"Yes," she answered.

"So-o-o! Then you are putting this theory into practice, eh?" He became reflective again. Then an odd look came into his face. "*Liebschen,*" he said, "is it this thought of yours that is keeping him alive?"

"God is his Life."

"*Himmel!* if you were but as loyal to me as you are to this fellow—*ach!* I should be the happiest man on earth. And to think that he kicked you out! *Doch!*"

"He did not do it. Evil only seemed to use him as a channel, because of his misconception of God."

"Let us have her idea of God," said the chaplain, rousing up and addressing the major. "It would be interesting."

"Speak, *Liebschen,*" the major commanded. "You have stirred the old dull-wit here."

CHAPTER 16

"START again," said the major, as Marian sat hesitant. "You have said that the only self-evident fact is consciousness. Go on."

She raised her head. "Man exists as a consciousness," she said, "although he believes himself to exist in a material body that has life and sensation. But consciousness is mental: therefore man exists as a mental thing. His life is his conscious experience. He knows nothing outside of himself; he knows only the contents of his own consciousness; and as this consists only of mental concepts, he can know only these. He never knows *real* things, but only his mental concepts of things. These mental concepts are built up out of thought. And the thought that forms them comes to him from without. But thought originates in mind. Therefore man depends upon mind for the concepts that are formed within his consciousness. Therefore man is thus literally created by mind. Thus it is that man is a reflection of mind, is mind's image and likeness, mind's manifestation and expression—even though he thinks he lives unto himself.

"But if Truth is primal, then the real Creator is real Mind, true, harmonious, perfect throughout. And real Man is this Mind's mental image, or idea, likewise perfect. In reality, then, God is Mind. But Truth, the primal, is followed by its suppositional opposite, error. And by reversal error seems to come first. Error is also mental. It poses as mind. It appears to give forth its suppositional thought —erroneous, for it is based on error—and the false activity of this erroneous thought gives

rise to the false consciousness that constitutes the mortal man, the human being. This is the only sort of man you know, Major. And you don't really *know* him, for error cannot really be known, any more than you can know that five and five make twelve."

"H'm!" commented the major. "A rather hard classification, for you make me an ignoramus, eh? But you are interesting. And you recall to me my own philosophy. Let us see, you dig a deep and impassable trench, I take it, on one side of which is Mind, the true and perfect Creator, and on the other side is its suppositional opposite, the 'communal mortal mind', is it not? *Nun gut!* the 'communal mortal mind' poses as a creator, too, and makes a material universe and a mortal man—all mental, of course. But, not being based on Truth, this mortal creation appears both good and evil, and mortal man the same. This man reflects and expresses his creator, the 'communal mortal mind', and his consciousness deals only with the mental objects built up out of the erroneous thoughts that come to it from this false parent mind, is it not so? These thoughts come to man by . . ."

"By suggestion, mental suggestion," she concluded. "And these suggestions become externalized to the individual mortal mind, called man, and result in discord and death—for, as you must know from experience, *every thought that comes to us tends to become outwardly manifested, externalized, in action, environment, or on our bodies.*"

"But, our bodies?"

"They are mental concepts, existing, not outside of ourselves, but within our mentalities. We know them only by being conscious of them. That is, we have mental concepts of material bodies. But these mental concepts are always within our mentalities, ourselves. Matter exists to us as a thing of thought. I say that I see you, but I am really mentally seeing a great many thoughts that combine to make up a mental picture, or concept, of you. And that concept is within myself."

"Then you should be able to change it by a change of thought, eh?"

"Yes, I can help you by having the right thought regarding the real *you.*"

"*Lieb' Gott!* is that what you are doing for Cragg?" he exclaimed, sitting up.

"Yes."

Silence lay upon them for a brief interval; then the chaplain spoke. "Where did you get these ideas?" he asked. And there was a note of sincerity in his voice.

"From the teachings of Jesus," she replied.

"*Doch!*"

"Ruhig, Muller!" the major put in bruskly. Then, to Marian: "Explain."

"Jesus was a consciousness," she said, "a thought-activity, dealing with such pure spiritual thought that he could see that men did *not* possess material bodies that were alive and sentient. He resolved the material body into thought—just as he resolved all material objects, everything, into thought—and back of all the supposition that came from the false communal mortal mind, the one lie, he saw Mind's idea of Itself, a compound idea, perfect and eternal. And this he knew to be the real Man. His so-called miracles were proofs that he possessed a demonstrable knowledge of Truth. He demonstrated the fact that God, as Mind, is all, and that the material universe and material man is but the counter-part, the opposite, the suppositional error. This was his scheme of salvation. It is ours."

"Listen, Marian," said the major, leaning forward and speaking more gently, "what did he say of death?"

She looked at him searchingly. She wondered if his thought was still of Alden. But his face remained inscrutable. Then she answered: "Jesus showed by his deeds, by his teaching, and by his manner of living that he knew matter to be a mental concept, formed of false thought, and therefore unreal. He could not have overcome it if it had been real, for real things are eternal. He knew the human body to be a manifestation of the human mind, a mental concept in human consciousness. He knew that human consciousness could not forever hold its false concepts, for they are not founded on Principle, Truth; so he knew that, in passing through the state called death, the human mind would resume its false activity and start to fashion another material manifestation—that it would build another material body and material environment, and probably one no better than the one it had just abandoned. This newer material manifestation is invisible to those who remain alive, for they hold different mental concepts and are in another state of consciousness, but it will be perfectly visible to those who have passed through the change called death."

"You do not believe in heaven or hell?" the chaplain asked.

"Tell us, Marian," the major said, and ignoring the chaplain, "what has become of the soldiers killed in this war."

"Human existence, on whatever plane of thinking," she answered, "is but a dream-counterfeit of real life. Those who are supposed to be killed, all those who have laid down their human sense of life in this hideous mental upheaval which we call war, are still engaged in actively living a material life in a different state of consciousness from ours. Yet they are just as much alive as we are—and no more so. They will again

die, die, die, until they learn what death is, and overcome it with the knowledge of God as eternal Life. When these soldiers die they leave behind them human beliefs externalized to us, mental concepts within ourselves, and which we called dead bodies. And we bury these mental concepts, in our dense ignorance of God as Life. In this way we believe we remove them from our consciousness—for we do not believe we can restore them, even if Jesus did."

"And you would say," the chaplain put in, "that all there is to death is the human belief that men die?"

"Yes," the girl answered. "This belief manifests in a change of consciousness—as do all human beliefs in greater or lesser degree. To believe that there is life and intelligence in matter is to be carnally minded—that is, to be subject to this human mind and its dead beliefs. And that, as Paul said, is death. And it does result in the conscious experience called death. Jesus explained again and again that death is a mesmeric sleep, out of which man would wake. So he does wake, in another state of consciousness. And to what he awakes depends upon what his thought has been here in this state of consciousness. Jesus explained all that by the parable of Dives and Lazarus. Men strive and struggle to keep their bodies safe and sound in this world, only to wake, as Jesus pointed out, on another plane of conscious existence and, because of their false thought, their material beliefs and concepts, begin another career of discord, misery, torment, and another death. But if we improve our opportunities here to grasp Truth, then the 'second death' can have no power over us, and we shall go on putting off the 'old man' until at last the real Man, our true Self, shall stand revealed, perfect and deathless."

The Egyptian entered at that moment with coffee, cognac, and fresh cigarettes. These she arranged on a small round table, which she placed between Marian and the men, then she withdrew noiselessly.

"Look you," the chaplain broke out, "where have the dead gone to?"

"They have gone nowhere," she replied. "They are as much here as they ever were. The material concept, whether of life or death, is always a supposition. You do not see them, because of a difference in states of consciousness. But Jesus knew so thoroughly how to prove the Allness of Mind, God, and the nothingness of the material mental concept, that he could recall back to this suppositional state of consciousness those who had passed out of it. But that was not necessarily a benefit to them, unless they thereafter improved the renewed opportunity which he afforded them to learn that death and matter are unreal

mental concepts and phenomena, and that they can be—and *must* be—overcome by destroying the false beliefs of the communal mortal mind that produce them. To prolong this present false sense of existence seems to mankind the one thing worth while; and to do it they rob, slay, and destroy. . .

"Not only did Jesus learn the Truth that enabled him to raise those dead in false beliefs, but so did Paul," she went on eagerly. "And the early Christians progressed so far that they could do likewise. It was more like waking people out of sleep, for in sleep we are in another state of consciousness. But then the belief of life in matter became so fixed in the human consciousness—and with it the belief that matter dies—that death became an even greater reality, and the power to overcome it was completely lost to mankind.

"The One Creator is Mind. His Creation is the revealing of Himself in the unfolding of His infinite number of ideas. These ideas are without number and range and variety, but the greatest of them is the idea of Himself. And this is the real Man. By working out of the false concepts of the communal mortal mind, or the carnal mind, we shall see ourselves and others as we really are. How soon this shall be depends upon how rapidly we progress out of the false into the true. It is all individual; we must, each one of us, do it for ourselves. Jesus taught us how, but did not do it for us. We must learn that no one outside of ourselves dies, but that the mental concepts of others which we hold in our mentalities and which we believe to be men and women outside and beyond ourselves, living their lives independent of ourselves—*it is these mental concepts that die,* and nothing else."

She paused and sat looking down at the floor. The major set down his cup and lighted another cigarette. "Let me grasp your thought," he said reflectively. "We do not see anything but the contents of our mentalities; we do not see anything but the mental concepts that we hold in our so-called minds, eh? These concepts we call men, women, animals, trees, and all the material objects which we believe to be about us. They are not round about us, they are *in* us, is it not so? We believe in death, and we see these mental concepts die within our mentalities. Nothing dies outside of us. And we bury our dead concepts and then mourn over the passing of those who have not passed away and whom we have never really seen. Is this your belief?"

"If we did not believe in death," she answered, "but really *knew* that God is infinite Life; if we did not believe in the reality of matter, but *knew* that God, as Spirit, is infinite substance; if we really knew ourselves as ideas of the Mind that

is God, and that we are therefore contained in that infinite Mind always; if we *knew* ourselves as compound ideas of Mind, and that we include all of Mind's ideas within ourselves as His reflection—then, Major, none of our concepts would die within us, and we should see death no more, but, rather, an eternal and unbroken manifestation of Life. In this way shall our covenant with death be annulled. Sin brought death into the human consciousness. Sin is the acceptance of error as Truth."

Again she sat silent; again her thought turned to the man for whom she was striving to prove the words she had been uttering. The chaplain stared at her uncomprehendingly. The major lay back among the pillows, blowing rings of tobacco smoke toward the low ceiling. The stuffy little room seemed to the girl to take on an evanescent, intangible, immaterial nature, as if it were a disincarnate mind. Through it she seemed to see transparent shapes, like men, moving, ghost-like, as they enacted their little dramas of unreality. She saw them meet; she saw them barter, love, struggle, and slay. She saw them pretend to live—and she knew their folly, for they were but unsubstantial concepts, things of false thought. And then she watched them wither and die. And others she saw take up the dead concepts and lay them away with tears and manifestations of great sorrow—and she smiled in loving pity, for they were all devoid of life, and one no more dead than another.

"*Doch,* Muller."

Marian roused suddenly. It was as if an alarm had been sounded. The chaplain and the major were both looking at her strangely. And the chaplain's cheeks were pale. A small clock on a desk in a corner of the room struck the hour of two.

"The chaplain," the major began slowly, "must go. He will marry us first. I have made the preparations."

Marian sat upright, rigid. The room whirled before her eyes. Through her mental haze, through the fumes of tobacco, the steam from the bubbling percolator, she saw the major's smile, the cruel, lustful leer of animal magnetism's imbruted tool.

"I must leave Jerusalem," he resumed in explanation. "Ordered north. I shall take you with me."

She found her voice; and it came steadily. "I cannot go with you," she said.

"But to leave you here, Marian," he continued heatedly, "is to abandon you to a Turkish harem."

"But I will remain."

"Bah! For Cragg? He is dead!"

"He is not! He lives!"

The major laughed and shrugged his shoulders. "According to your interesting philosophy, yes. But that was for conversation. We are dealing with *practical* matters now. Come, Marian, there is no other way. . ."

She had risen, and stood before him erect and pale, but unfrightened. "I shall not marry you, Otto," she said.

He looked at her for a moment. His eyes narrowed. "So-o-o!" he muttered. Then he sprang to his feet. "Go home, Muller," he commanded rudely. "She will be ready for the ceremony by morning. You, Zuleyka!" he called loudly.

The Egyptian shuffled in from the outer room. The major turned again to Marian. "You will reconsider and permit Muller to marry us?" he demanded. The chaplain stood hesitant.

"I shall not marry you, Otto," she repeated.

"Show the chaplain out," the major commanded the Egyptian. "Then do you watch by the prisoner, Cragg, below."

Marian's head sank. "I thank Thee, O Father," she murmured. Then she looked up. The major stood watching her. And they were alone.

CHAPTER 17

BUT that the human mind, so-called, is by its nature forced to believe in something besides itself, it would not so readily mistake effect for cause, and look always to matter—demonstrably a mental phenomenon—for happiness. Had Otto Hoeffel, boasting himself superlative, in that he was German, priding himself on the dubious results of his trickery and deceit, his cunningly wielded material power—had this man known that he differed from the beasts only in his reflection of the mortal mind's arrogant claim "to be as gods"—could he have lifted the material veil before his blinded eyes—could he have peered into the black depths of the human nature of which he made his ignorant boast, and seen there the foul serpents of mesmerism that, with their lying suggestions, had robbed him of his heritage as a son of God, he would have fallen in penitent humility at the feet of the girl whom he would crush, yet who now stood there possessed of the only salvation possible to him and to the deluded world which he and the lusting compatriots of Franz Mesmer had hoped to dominate.

He knew, as he stood looking at her, that she possessed something that he did not—something more than the dead letter of metaphysical philosophy, for he had shown that he could recite that as glibly as she. He knew that, though he possessed

her, he was already conquered—even as he knew that the iniquitous cause for which his deluded countrymen were dying was already lost. And the thought maddened him; the lust of revenge befouled his judgment; he could have struck the girl dead, but that he preferred torture. . .

"Well," he taunted, "you are waiting?" His mouth curved with a cruel smile. "You are waiting, eh?"

She looked into his eyes. It was moments before she spoke. Then: "Yes, I am waiting." She seemed to be looking past him, into unfathomable space. "I have been waiting," she continued abstractedly. "It seems to be the common lot of humanity to be always waiting—waiting for something to happen, or to stop happening—waiting for something or somebody to come to the rescue—waiting for something, somebody, to change. And yet it is not that I have *had* to wait, but that I have been learning to wait—learning that time is not—that I am in eternity now."

"But what are you waiting for?" he asked bluntly.

She looked again at him. "I am waiting for . . . God," she slowly answered.

He stood silently regarding her; then his shoulders went up, and he laughed lightly. "And you expect Him to come?" he asked.

"He is here," she replied.

"So-o-o! *Nun gut*, present me—for I do not see Him," he mocked, looking about.

"Only the pure in heart—in thought—see Him," was her answer.

He laughed again. And his laugh was tinctured with shame. "But," he bantered, "our theologians, like Muller, have made it so specially difficult to be pure that I gave it up. Too much struggle—endless fight with evil—then failure, repentance, struggle again, and again failure and a new start. I got tired, eh?"

"But you are not bidden to fight sin and impurity as if they were real powers, but to learn that they are the communal mortal mind's lying suggestions of something apart from the One Mind, God, and therefore nothing."

"Ah, you license evil, eh? Good! I feel less restraint."

"Evil," she replied, "is evil thought. Its activity produces a consciousness of evil, resulting in discord, suffering, disease, and death. Its indulgence is suicidal. That is its license. Does it appear attractive to you when bared by Truth? Does it still mesmerize you?"

"But, Marian"—his tone was gentler—"I sought the good, I sought you, but you spurned me."

"You sought only a mortal concept of good: you did not

seek to know God first. If you had . . . if you had . . . Oh, Otto . . ." She sank down again upon her chair. "Oh, if you only knew the unlimited grandeur of the right outlook—if you could but glimpse the real Man, of which your mortal concept of yourself is such a distorted image! Oh, if you could only see that all cause and all effect are mental, not physical! If you could see that it is only as consciousness that evil exists, and that a change of thought will change the consciousness and give Spirit for matter, good for evil, happiness for misery, life for death! I do not ask you to spare me, Otto; but your God calls upon you to spare *yourself!*"

He still stood. His smile had gone, but now it returned. He drew nearer to her. Then he halted. "Thor is god," he said, "and he is force."

"Mind is God," she returned; "and is omnipotent."

"Thor has put your God to rout in this war," he pursued defiantly. "Thor is definite, virile, masculine. Your God is indefinite theory."

"Thor has put the human concept of God to rout; but my God is Jehovah," she declared, "the infinite Father-Mother."

"Mother, eh?" His brows went up and he laughed. "Is then your God a *woman?* Why not call her Venus?"

"Hovah means 'Eve', the mother of all living," she answered. "So God combines all real qualities, feminine and masculine. He is Spirit, and He is Love. He is Principle, He is that by which all is that is real, and He is Life."

"I said your God was theory. You now call it Principle."

"He is Law. And His are the only laws. He is primal Good, therefore eternal and self-existent. He is infinite Life. He is perfect and harmonious, and therefore Truth. He is omnibeneficent, so He is Love. He is the substance and true nature of all that exists, and He is Soul. He is unlimited, omnipresent, and therefore Spirit. He is all intelligence and power, He is Mind. He is and embraces all that is real, for He is infinite Good. As Mind, He is manifested in the countless ideas that express Him. In reality, Otto, you are one of those ideas, and so the true *you* is a Son of God."

"Are you trying to mesmerize me with your swift speaking?" he ejaculated, stepping back. "You are like a machine gun! But—*Doch!* such feeble bullets do no good." He came and stood over her. "Well," he finally demanded, as she sat quiescent, "you are not afraid?"

She looked up at him. "No."

He bent forward and seized her hand. "Why should you fear?" he asked; "for I love you. And . . . *Ach!* I would not harm you, if you would say that you would decently marry

me! Say it; then I will send for Muller in the morning . . . and you may go now, eh? Say it, *Liebschen!* Say it!"

"It is not right that I should marry you, Otto," she answered.

"But you give no reasons, *Liebschen!* Look, you may save me, eh? I will let you teach me all you know about your God, eh? I confess, I was really interested in what you said to Muller and me. Marry me, and you may reform me."

"But I will teach you now, Otto. I will gladly give you all my own knowledge. I will work with you and for you, to help yourself, to help others. . ."

"*Nun gut!* Marry me, and you shall do all that! I will be a new man! We will save Alden, and send him home. . ."

"No, Otto. You are not seeking Truth. It is the lusting human mind that is using you. And it is death."

"So you still refuse?"

"Yes."

He jerked her suddenly to a standing posture and pulled her to him. "Look," he cried, "you are under suspicion of having military secrets from Penberry! For that you can be shot! So can Cragg! But to marry me will save you both!"

She shook her head. "I have no such secrets," she murmured. "They may shoot me. . ."

"If I leave you here, you will be sent to a Turkish harem!"

"I am not afraid."

He glared down into her face. His eyes had drawn to narrow slits, and his mouth was working convulsively. "But you think I will leave you to be seized, eh?" he snarled. *"Nein!* but after I am through with you I will *sell* you to the Turks! . . . By God, I will! And Cragg, he shall be thrown to the dogs! You will let Muller marry us now, eh?"

She gasped in his close embrace. "No . . . no . . . God is my Life . . . my protection . . . evil is not power. . ."

A call was heard from the outer room. The major dropped the girl and turned quickly, just as the Egyptian rushed in. "The prisoner!" she cried loudly; "he is *gone!*"

Marian swayed, started forward, and sank to the floor. The major seized the Egyptian by the arm. "What do you mean?" he demanded.

"I left his side to prepare coffee . . . see, it is dawn! . . . When I went back he was not there! I called the guard! They have given the alarm!"

The major thrust her from him, with a volley of oaths, and hurried to the ancient prison below. The woman watched him depart; her features worked curiously, her eyes glowed; then she came to where Marian lay and bent over her. *"Ma chérie!"* she whispered. *"Ma petite!"*

* * * * * * * *

Insensible to environment or the passing of time; his mentality now functioning vigorously, now for long intervals inert; his consciousness keen for brief periods, and then going utterly blank, like the quenching of a light; the slave's faculties seemed to be at length aroused to a sense-impression of a rough, dusty road, choked with people. These were coming and going, or stood gathered in little groups, all talking excitedly, with much gesturing, rolling of eyes, and laying of hands upon flowing beards. He drew near to one of the groups and paused to listen.

"God of our fathers!" he heard a bearded patriarch cry; "what has come among us, that the dead should rise at the command of this ignorant fellow! Say again, O Felix, was not this Lazarus merely dormant? For the dead shall not rise until the last day."

"And so said his sister Martha, who would have deferred her brother's rising until that awful day. But the Nazarene, as if correcting her, proclaimed *himself* to be the resurrection and the life; and in proof thereof he proceeded to the tomb. . ."

"Yes, yes! And there . . . ?"

"There . . . But my hair rises and my skin grows icy cold when I think on it! There he . . . *thanked God that He had heard him!*"

"But thy wits stray, O Felix, for the man had not yet prayed to God!"

"Nay, O Simon, but I think the man does naught but pray —but in a manner quite unknown to us. It is as if his gratitude were constant prayer, for he ever giveth thanks, and that before the appearance of the thing which he desires. It is not so taught in our law . . . and yet . . . it bringeth results."

"He does not conform to our law. He fasts not. . ."

"And yet, O Simon, it is as if his firm reliance upon his God were a perpetual fast from any other dependence."

"Out upon you, O Felix! Art thou become a follower of this necromancer?"

"I know not! I know not! And yet . . . yet, when I stood before that sepulcher and heard his mighty voice . . . when I looked with bursting eyes and saw . . . God of our fathers! when I saw the dead man issue from the tomb . . . oh, then every jot and every tittle of the law fled from me, and I fell upon my face and cried: 'This is the very Christ!' "

"Thou shalt answer to the Sanhedrin for this, and so shall he!" cried the angry Simon. "How sayest thou, O noble Kem?" as his eyes fell upon the physician who had just joined the group. "Was Lazarus dead?"

The Egyptian laughed loudly and long. "Dead!" he

exclaimed in derision. "No more than you or I, my Simon! Canst not discern the clumsy trick? The necromancer had but arranged for a potion to be given his confederate, Lazarus, to lull him into the appearance of death, that later he might seem to raise him and thus win the support of the masses for his purposed overthrow of the existing authority and the establishment of himself as king. Go, speak to Lazarus, as I have done. Thou'lt find him dumb; he dares not talk, lest he betray the deep conspiracy."

"Lazarus shall be forthwith apprehended. And this wonder-worker, too."

"Oh," laughed the physician, "as for this fellow, fear not; I am on my way to lay the matter now before Caiaphas. The Nazarene predicteth his own death, it seems; and in that prophecy he is right. We shall take care that he issue not forth from his tomb. . . Great Ptah!" he muttered, as he started away, "were he to continue his cures and other works, we physicians soon would find ourselves but beggars!"

Crassius forced his way into the group and confronted the physician. "Where is this man?" he demanded sharply.

The physician looked at him in astonishment. "What is that to thee, slave?" he answered. Then: "Ah, thou art of Pilate's household! Good! The procurator sends thee to trace the necromancer? Follow this road, then, to Bethany, and inquire for one Lazarus. Thou'lt find the fellow in his house."

The slave turned and darted off. On the way he passed an endless stream of people, discussing the mighty event just enacted. In this he was little interested. His feebly operative thought rested only upon himself and his seeming needs. If this man were to be apprehended, perhaps killed, it was imperative to find him now and secure the freedom upon which his whole being centered.

Entering the village, he again caught sight of the familiar figure of the Greek Gaius, walking slowly and in company with a man of striking mien and great dignity. The two were discussing earnestly the great themes of the hour, and the slave fell in behind them, hoping to learn from their lips of the whereabouts of the great prophet.

"It was nine and three-quarter centuries ago that the Hebrew nation, the children of Israel, divided into the ten-tribed House of Israel and the two-tribed one of Judah," the companion of Gaius was explaining in a low, rich voice. "The former returned not from their captivity at the hands of the Assyrian, but fled at length from the land of the Goyim northward into Scythia, where they dwell to this day, a mighty and powerful host, of whom Peter says that they are kept by the power of

God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed at the last time.

"Now the elders and the chief priests of the Jews, the House of Judah, long have anxiously expected a restoration of the ancient kingdom of David. And upon its throne they hope to place a Jewish king. They fear the House of Israel, for, though Israel was disinherited by the Lord, yet was it provided that they should be restored if they would repent and return to the Covenant. Now as yet Israel has not repented nor been restored to the favor divine, but—ah, the Jews rest uneasy lest this should occur. And so the Jewish elders did craftily approach this prophet Jesus, to learn if perchance he would become their king, whom they thereupon would proclaim in the Temple. . ."

"And what said Jesus?" Gaius asked eagerly.

The other smiled as he made reply: "He gave them the parable of the vineyard. It enraged the Jews beyond bounds. For it foretold that the 'stone', the attribute of Joseph of the House of Israel, should be accepted. He meant that the rejected nation of Israel, which had gone after other gods, should repent and become the keeper of the Word and the accepted. From this nation should be revealed the Kingdom of God. For this, the enraged Jews, in bitter disappointment, decreed that Jesus must die."

"And shall he die, think you?"

"He himself predicts it."

"But, though the kingdom is taken away from the Jews, yet it is not at once restored to the House of Israel, O Levi."

"Nay, Israel must be prepared through many centuries, as Peter saith. The reign of evil is long, for men's thoughts are basely false. The prophet Daniel doth predict it a full 'seven times'. And that would extend for some nineteen hundred years hence, as I have explained. For the Kingdom is spiritual, and Israel must reveal itself as spiritual Israel, of which House the Christ is the corner. But, O Gaius, what marvel of man is this same Jesus, that, having demonstrated his marvelous spiritual powers, he could withstand the temptation to place himself at the head of the mighty forces of hidden Israel, with all Jewry rallied to his call, and fall upon the power of Rome, which doubtless he could quickly crush! He could then make himself master of the world! . . . But of a world material . . . and thereby would he lose his power of the Spirit, and his mighty mission would utterly fail. Wonderful vision hath he, O Gaius! But for this he goeth to his death. And yet he meeteth death but to slay it, I am persuaded."

The slave caught but the single impression: the wonder-

worker was in the shadow of death. There was no time to lose. He therefore hurried ahead of the men and placed himself before them. "Where is the man?" he again put his insistent question.

Gaius turned to his companion. "He seeketh Jesus, O Levi," he said.

The other bent his fine eyes upon the slave. "Why seek ye him?" he asked.

"I would have him make me free."

"From sin? Infirmity? Disease?"

"No!" cried Crassius. "From slavery!"

"The truth shall make you free," came the reply.

"What truth?"

"That God is All."

Crassius stamped his foot in rage and stooped again to reach for a stone; but as he bent over he hung for a moment in that posture, then slowly straightened up and stood staring stupidly into the man's face.

"But, O Levi," Gaius added, "you omit the condition with which the Master prefaced this wondrous promise. *'If ye continue in my word'*, said he, *'ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free'.*"

"Wilt thou hear his word?" said Levi, speaking again to Crassius.

"No, I want to be made free," cried the slave.

"Turn back, then," said Levi sadly. "Thou seekest but the loaves and the fishes. Thou'lt not find him here. And until thou forget *thyself*, thou shalt be beaten with many stripes."

The slave's rage flared forth like a volcano. Great flames of red appeared to flash before his eyes. His head seemed to him to swell to bursting. Then all became dark, and deep silence fell upon him. . .

When he opened his eyes again he saw that he was entering the foul *ergastulum* of the Tower of Antonia, shackled, and guarded by the Roman soldiers who had been despatched to find him. Before he became fully aware of his environment, he was stripped, chained to a stone pillar, and set upon by two gigantic slaves wielding long bull's-hide whips.

Again and again the lashes wound hissing around his shrinking body. Again and again long, piercing shrieks burst from his macerated lips. His giant tormentors laughed as the flesh ripped apart and the red blood spurted.

"But for the excitement which the Nazarene pretender hath wrought, this Jew had not so easily avoided search these many days," panted one, as he paused to rest his arm.

"Excitement! Gods!" ejaculated the other, likewise pausing

in his cruel task. "Timeus reports that the pretender hath entered the city in triumph, and riding—O ye gods!—riding upon an *ass!*" He broke into a torrent of laughter, in which the other joined heartily. "And this fool," pointing to their victim with his whip, "was seized while following him. Verily, he hath lost his wits, as now he shall lose his life. Come, bear on!"

Again they fell to plying their whips. The slave's piteous shrieks reverberated in his own ears and echoed back like wailing moans from a lost world. He sank, and hung by his wrists. The cruel pain cut him through and through with agony indescribable. The great lashes, as they flew toward him and wrapped around his lacerated body seemed to him like monstrous serpents that coiled and stung him ever and again, driving their huge fangs into his writhing flesh and filling it with boiling venom. He begged; he pled; he offered wealth inexhaustible to his tormentors. They mocked him, jeered him, commended him to the Nazarene, then redoubled their efforts, until his brain seared under the awful torture and the light faded and thought, and with it consciousness, became again inert.

CHAPTER 18

"I AM sorry he was handled so roughly." It was the major who spoke, and his voice was very gentle. "But he fought the soldiers, and they had to defend themselves."

During the day that had dragged its weary length through the subterranean chambers of the old Tower, Cragg had lain motionless. It appeared, from the Egyptian's story, that while Marian was in the major's apartment the preceding night, Cragg had suddenly sprung from his bed, as if with a resurgence of life, and had made his escape down through the corridors and past the drowsing guard into the dark street. Before he could be apprehended he had fled the full length of the Via Dolorosa and had reached the city wall. In the struggle that ensued at the Zion gate he had been painfully bruised and beaten; and now he lay spent, broken. . .

"Sinking," the surgeon said, looking down at the still form. "Not necessary to strap him. *Doch!* it is a strange case. Very strange."

Yet he lived; yet Marian, harassed, wearied, held to him, as she sat on the low stool beside his cot, fighting the black shadows back. The major stood beside her. His face looked worn and drawn with suffering. He had not seen her, after leaving

her with the Egyptian in his apartment, until he returned at sunrise with the soldiers who were bearing Cragg. Then, at sight of the girl, his face flushed; a look of penitence came into it; his manner became soft, and his words tenderly solicitous. He did not remain long; and Marian was again left alone with the dying man and the Egyptian.

But he was *not* dying! The death-thought should *not* find acceptance as Truth in her mentality, and there begin a false activity that would become externalized to her in Alden's passing! And as she sat resisting the error that, entering, would set up concepts to prove that God is not Life, she heard a footfall near her. Looking up, she saw the chaplain, Muller.

"I apologize," he began hastily, after pausing and glancing furtively about. "I felt that I must see you, alone." He noiselessly drew up another stool and sat down near her. She looked at him wonderingly. For some time he sat staring at Cragg. Then he raised his head and turned to the girl. "I am, to the major, a dull-wit," he said haltingly. "It is because he does not know, he does not know! . . . I have been speaking with the Egyptian. I thank God that the major did not harm you! And now . . ." He paused and again glanced cautiously around. "I can help you . . . to escape."

Marian's heart leaped high and she sprang up, with a low cry. Then she glanced down at Cragg.

But the chaplain shook his head. "Impossible to take him," he said sadly. "He and you—you do not know—you are held as political prisoners, rather than mere prisoners of war. He may give useful information, and you also. You can escape if you marry the major. . . *Ach!* you must not do that, no, no! I can get you away . . . to-night, but not him."

She had sat down again. "I cannot leave him," she answered.

"I . . . I did not think you would," he said, speaking with feverish rapidity. "I hoped you would not. If you had, it would have overthrown all that you said last night. I have come here . . ." Again he looked about the room. His voice was lower when he resumed. "I am risking perhaps my life, perhaps yours . . . but I . . . *Ach,* I am so weary of life! I am so weary of seeing men die, die, die! And for what? That a few, as you say, mortal minds may be more puffed up . . . that our bloated Kaiser may bloat still more! *Ach!* I preached for the war, from my pulpit. . . God forgive me! It was blasphemy! But I, too, was mesmerized! And I would give my life to stop it all now! German? *Ach!* may I never be known again as *German.* My only remaining hope is that I

may, some time, know that, after all, I am a son of God. And you, *Fräulein,* you started my hope afresh last night. Could you tell me more? talk to me more? The Egyptian is in the streets, gathering provisions from the markets. The major has gone down to Hebron. Beersheba has fallen. The British approach. But what of that! Talk to me . . . or I shall go mad thinking of what my countrymen have done . . . what I have preached. . . *Ach, Gott!*"

The girl sat looking at the man, her thought tumultuous, her eyes wide with wonder. He seemed to read the questions which she mutely voiced, and hastened to meet them. "I was deceiving you both last night," he said, and his speech came incoherently. "If the major knew, he would kill me! Oh, I trembled for you . . . I asked the Egyptian woman when I left if she could not protect you. . . She is odd, but I think trustworthy. What she did, if anything, I do not know. But now that Beersheba has fallen, the major will be desperate! Your danger has increased a thousand fold! *Ach,* it is the old story repeated: tortures, starvation, cruelties unspeakable! Oh, the black horror of the war! . . . I have seen it all! The crushed bodies, the broken spirits! . . . Oh, the little children, eyeless, handless, dismembered! And the nameless babes! . . . Oh, what bitterness, what hatred, behind all that illegitimacy! . . . Oh, the helpless, pathetic babes! But the mothers, forced into such cruel torture of body and soul! *Gott!* And that is what threatens you! Nothing can save you if you remain here . . . and yet you will not abandon this fellow prisoner, I know. It is a Christly sacrifice that you make! Oh, help me to make it, too . . . for I cannot live thus, I cannot, I cannot!"

He broke down and, burying his face in his hands, sobbed aloud. Marian rose quickly and went to him. She knew that the man, in opening the way of escape to her, was laying down his own life. And she thereby knew that he was not far from the Kingdom. She put an arm about his shoulders and bent over him. "God has sent us to each other," she whispered, "because He loves us."

The man looked up. For a while he struggled to control his emotions. Marian drew her stool close beside him. "You are starving for love," she said. "The German people are starving for it. So is the world. Yet God *is* Love, infinite Love. . ."

"How can He be? . . . for He does not pity human distress . . . He permits this wicked war. . . *Ach,* but I would say: there is no God! Tell me! . . . talk to me! . . . convince me! . . . or I shall go mad!"

She took his hand. "Look," she said, nodding her head

toward the high, barred window. The sun was low, the sky clear, blue, unfathomable. He followed her gaze. "You are looking into space," she said gently. "Send your thought out there, and it will return and say: 'There is no end!' For the depth of space is infinite. Yet it is everywhere filled with evidences of a creator. Separated by untold millions of miles, there are countless other worlds, countless forms, countless creations, embraced in limitless space, all obeying law, all manifesting intelligence, all comprising an infinite universe pervaded by that which indicates mind. It is an infinite creation, an infinite effect—even if you consider that it is all self-created.

"But an effect is unthinkable without a cause. And the infinite effect known as the universe implies an infinite cause, does it not? And the continuous existence of the infinite universe indicates a cause that is eternal. The government of the infinite universe indicates an infinitive governing principle, or something by which all is and is maintained. There is, then, a God."

"Yes, yes . . . true," the chaplain murmured. "But what is He?"

"But, more," she went on, "the infinite cause of the infinite universe must be omnipotent to maintain a universe that is without limits. And being omnipotent, it must be a sole and only cause, without any opposing element, or force, or being. Once omnipotent, it must always be omnipotent, therefore perfect and harmonious, for it could never create for itself any element of discord or decay. And there is no other power to implant such elements within it. Therefore the creator remains infinite, omnipotent, perfect, and the only power. There is a God, and He is infinite Power."

"Power, yes, blind, unthinking power . . ."

"Listen," she said: "since the creation, throughout its endless millions of miles of extent, manifests intelligence and law, its infinite creator must comprise that intelligence. But intelligence is a function of mind. It requires mind for its habitat. Therefore the creator, comprising an intelligence that is infinite, is infinite mind. There is a God, and He thinks and knows."

"But He cannot care for His creatures; He neglects them. Is it not so?"

"Let us first say what His creatures are," she answered. "For, since mind is the creator, and since it is infinite in extent, its creation must be contained within itself, and must be mental. But the activities of mind are manifested in ideas, in thoughts, in mental ways. And so it must follow that, since the creation is the product of an infinite mind, the universe must be wholly

mental. And, as part of the universe, we ourselves are mental, and are contained with the mental universe in this infinite creative mind. Is it not so? And the act of creation—far from being the creation of a material universe out of nothingness—is really the eternal unfolding of infinite mind's infinite number and variety of ideas within itself. Creation, then, is the eternal and infinite expression of the infinite creative mind through the revelation, or unfolding, of its ideas—very much as the human mind expresses itself by means of its ideas.

"But the ideas of infinite mind must range from the infinitesimal to the infinite, in order fully to express that mind. And the greatest of these ideas must be the idea of the creative mind itself. This idea must of necessity be a compound idea, including all other ideas. A watch, you know, is a compound idea, including the ideas of wheels, springs, bearings, and all that go to make up the whole. Now the greatest idea of infinite mind must be exactly like its parent mind, must be its image and likeness, its reflection, its full representation. This greatest idea is what we call man. Look through the window. The things that you think you see all really exist, but you are seeing only your ideas of them; and these ideas are within yourself, for you are a compound idea, a mentality, a consciousness, seeing your mental concepts of things, as I said last night.

"And so there *is* a God. And He is the creative Principle of all that is. He is eternal; He is Life. He is the true; He is Truth. He lovingly unfolds His creation and maintains it with infinite consideration; He is infinite Love. He is all the substance there is; He is infinite Soul, the heart and core of all. He is unlimited, therefore omnipresent; He is infinite Spirit. He is all intelligence and power; He is infinite Mind. He is all that is beautiful, desirable, real; He is infinite Good. All, then, is infinite Mind and this Mind's ceaseless and harmonious manifestation. And this is God.

"And we—the real *we*—are His ideas of Himself, and are mental, spiritual, perfect. We are His 'children'. We are in Him, like the fishes in the boundless sea. We are embraced in Love, and are the objects of His infinite consideration. *For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end.*"

"*Ach!* but He does not pity human suffering," moaned the chaplain.

"*He does not see it,*" the girl replied. "The human suffering is all within the communal mortal mind and its mortal manifestation. And that is the suppositional opposite of the Mind that is God, and therefore without real existence. Its existence is supposition—as we said last night. And Jesus has given us

the method of destroying this supposition and seeing ourselves perfect and harmonious. Whatever God sees is very good. It *has* to be so. It is the real. If He saw evil and suffering, then these would be real and eternal. Then, indeed, would we be without hope.

"You see," she continued eagerly, "according to Spencer's discovery, the suppositional opposite always seems to follow the reality—why, we do not know. But such seems to be the case, and we must admit it. Therefore, to all that is real, to Mind and Its infinite manifestation, there seems to be the suppositional opposite, the unreal, the communal mortal mind, without Principle, without Life, without Love or Truth, yet counterfeiting all these, and counterfeiting the Creation by seeming to create a material universe and material man, reflecting, not Truth, but human intelligence based on error. It is the mortal children of this communal mortal mind that are at war to-day, destroying one another. These mortals reflect the 'mist' that went up from the earth and watered the face of the ground. The communal mortal mind is mystification, mesmerism, supposition, ignorance, false belief of life and mind and substance in matter. It is error. It is what your compatriot, Franz Mesmer, revealed and named Animal Magnetism. And under this name it will disappear from consciousness forever."

"But how, then, are we mortals able to recognize and know Truth?" he urged.

"The communal mortal mind, imitating the real Creation, has slowly developed its material man," she explained. "And this slow unfolding has taken place through long periods of time and through repulsive animal shapes and mentalities, until mortal man has reached his present status. At one stage of his unfoldment he was the Pithecanthropus, an ape-like creature that lived a half million years ago; at another stage he was the Neanderthal man; at another, the Cro-Magnon man; to-day he is the Twentieth century man, with his horrible animal instincts covered with a thin veneer of civilization. But, while the communal mortal mind developed various animal creatures, its man alone has shown the ability to reason rightly, to follow an argument to its logical end. You see, in counterfeiting the real Mind and Its Man this communal mortal mind counterfeited the inclusion of right ideas. There is a spark of spiritual power in the human man. *And this is his salvation!* Because of it, there can be better desires, efforts toward reform, and the working out of one's salvation. Man exists as consciousness; he can become conscious of Good by a change in his thought, and the better thoughts will then form better and better concepts, until he at last reaches the perfect concept

of Mind and Its infinite manifestation, and the concept of error, with discord, disease, the horrors of war, suffering, death itself, will disappear from consciousness."

"But do you thus account for the presence of wickedness in the world? Do you thus solve the great problem of evil?" The man's eagerness was pathetic.

"Evil exists only as consciousness. A consciousness of evil is the result of accepting the evil thoughts that by their activity form such consciousness. These evil thoughts come, not from the Mind that is God, but from Its suppositional opposite—for, if you will watch them, you will discover that all such evil thoughts deny the existence and presence of God."

"But we see evil all about us!"

"All evil—the child of error, itself the suppositional opposite of Truth—is but the testimony of the five physical senses. But these senses, it is now discovered, *give us no testimony at all!* Seeing, feeling, smelling, hearing, and touching, all reduce to *beliefs,* or thoughts, of doing these things. We see, hear, smell, taste, and feel only the contents of our consciousness. And that, as you now know, consists of mental concepts, images of thought. Hence, all evil rests on a foundation of falsehood—of lies. And these will always be found to be lies about God and His Creation. Thus, evil is unreal. And on the basis of its unreality only can it be overcome."

"But . . . Satan?"

"The communal mortal mind is Satan. And this is reflected in countless mortals, so-called mentalities, or minds. But this mind is ignorance only, malicious and self-destructive. Its beliefs kill it. It suffers agony because of its false beliefs, and inflicts unspeakable torture on its companion mortal minds, which likewise suffer in belief, for they believe that matter is real substance and possesses life and sensation. Outside the concepts of mortality, evil does not exist at all. Therefore God does not know or see it."

"But the theological systems of the world have their basis in the belief that sin is real!" he protested.

"And, believing it to be real, they have never been able to overcome it, have they?" she said. "No, nor ever can on that basis."

At that moment a noise was heard in the corridor without. The chaplain started and half rose from his chair. "I . . . I am exposing you to danger . . . but I know no other way to learn these things . . . and you are lifting a burden from my soul. But, for your sake, I should go."

She restrained him by a hand. "I am not afraid for myself. The human sense of existence which I call life is not

my own. It is yours, everybody's, for I am making it witness to God. And so I do not fear death."

He sank back on his stool. "You are wonderful! Fear . . . it is my greatest torture, my worst enemy," he said, again glancing anxiously down toward the corridor.

"And yet the Bible, which you say you accept as your guide to salvation, is full of admonitions to be not afraid. Isn't there something wrong with your theology?—else you would take Jesus at his word. But you believe thoroughly in the reality and existence of evil; you believe that it has power greater than God; and so you fear it. Evil, with sin, sickness and death, is your god. According to Paul, the belief in both good and evil constitutes sin. And this ends in death. The primitive man's worship was caused by fear. And you still worship as he did."

"Yes, yes, I know. I must recast my views. I can see that there must be a complete restatement of fundamental Christianity. We preachers have gone far astray. Everything shows it, particularly this war. But, tell me, in what point have we been most mistaken?"

"In making Jesus God," she answered quickly. "The claims of theology that Jesus was God have inhibited the world's efforts to obey his commands and work out its salvation as he did. Jesus was *not* God, and he was *not* Christ. The Christ is the spiritual Man, the image and likeness of God. Jesus denied his mortal selfhood, and thereby, and by knowing the Allness of God, he put off the mortal man—got rid of the human, mortal concept of man—and revealed the Christ, our real spiritual selfhood. And he told us that we must do likewise, and he taught us how to do it. He said that a change in thinking would change the man. The entire condition of the human, mortal man can thus be changed, including his body and its functions, his environment, all ill conditions, all liability to chance, to accident, to disaster, poverty, sickness, death. He taught that these things are all mental before they become physical, that they are beliefs of the human mind that become outwardly externalized, and that all a man's conscious experience which he calls life, including his bodily experience, will be according to the nature and quality of his thought. This does not change or affect the real Man; but right thinking so removes, displaces, destroys the unreal man that the real one becomes revealed. This is the teaching of primitive Christianity. You can see for yourself how far orthodox theology has departed from it during the ages."

The chaplain sat reflecting for some moments. "If we had thought in this manner," he said at length, "there would have been no war."

"No," she answered. "And Germany would have had all the good that it so mistakenly sought to gain by slaughtering the neighboring nations."

"Our leaders are failing, because . . ."

"Because they were induced by error, the communal mortal mind, to rely wholly on mortal mind physical force, and to throw spirituality, the only real power, to the winds. Fear drove them into this war. Fear drove them into frightfulness. Fear composed their Hymns of Hate. Fear is defeating them. Fear is materiality; it rests on material props, uses material weapons, material force, then fails utterly, for it is itself only a false belief of power apart from the Mind that is God."

They were startled by the sound of approaching footsteps. It was the Egyptian, shuffling into the room, her arms laden with bundles. The chaplain rose to take his leave. "I thank you," he said, as he took Marian's hand. "I do not go away unconvinced . . . and yet, if there were but some *proof* that your deductions are correct . . . some proof . . . something practical. . . But it may come. . . I pray God it may. You are wonderful in your great danger, to think of helping me. I will seek every opportunity to talk with you again. Remember, always, that I must appear as the major's dull-wit." And he was gone.

Marian stood watching him until he entered the corridor. Then her head sank. "I must prove," she murmured; "for his sake, for Alden's, for Otto's, the world's, I must, I *must!*"

CHAPTER 19

A DAY passed, and then another. And the major had not returned. On the third morning after the major's departure for Hebron Marian stood at dawn before one of the high, narrow windows of her prison. Silence lay about her; the leaves hung motionless on the trees; the birds still slept. "The sun will rise," the girl murmured; "and just so surely will the Christ come to us . . . to Alden and to me . . . across the waters."

She had been startled at the change that had appeared to come over Alden. He had lain so still; the waving of his arms had become gradually feebler, until now it had ceased. The forced feeding, which the surgeon had insisted upon, had become so difficult that it had been suspended. The surgeon remained taciturn: the prisoner's soul, he knew, was loosening and straining away. The Egyptian shook her head and looked curiously, expectantly, at Marian.

In the Egyptian Marian was finding a puzzling combination of reticence and garrulity. But that morning the woman had let fall a cryptic remark that was startling in its import. "These are the last days," she had said, pausing for a moment at the girl's side before the window. "Our great pillar shows it. It must be that Jeremiah Roake is busy. . . *Eh, bien*, very busy!" Then she had pattered away and into the kitchen to her work.

Marian's head whirled. Then she had tried to reason that it was mere coincidence—and coincidence, rather than sequence, is so often the order of mundane affairs where action is but the lawless expression of thought that rests far more on error than on Truth. The woman might have known Doctor Roake. He had studied in Egypt; he was an international character . . . yet such a remark indicated only too clearly that this Egyptian was not of the lowly caste in which apparently she had elected to dwell. But the girl's thought was then too full for speculation on a possible coincidence. . .

Yet, though her thought was preoccupied, she had become aware of an increasing tension in the very air, as it were. The quiet that enveloped the old Tower when she arrived was now rudely disturbed. There were rumblings and excited calls and exclamations without. That morning several German officers had entered the ancient dungeon of the Tower to make a hasty inspection, and had departed, talking rapidly. Others came. And they stared curiously at Marian, and smiled knowingly, and nodded their heads. Turkish officers appeared with the Germans; and the unfriendly tension between the Turk and his Teutonic betrayer was all too apparent in its augury. A German officer who could speak English addressed the girl. "We have all heard of you," he said. "The major has made us jealous with his praises of your beauty and wit. If he should fortunately be killed, you will not lack attention." Then he shrugged his shoulders and went away laughing. Still others came and stared, first at Cragg, then at her, stared insolently and made jesting remarks to one another. She sat quietly under their scrutiny; she answered the questions put to her by those who could speak her language or the French tongue, but she asked none. Yet she knew from the bits of excited conversation which she caught that Beersheba had fallen, some days since—that the German plan to make it a suitable base for cutting the Suez Canal had suffered irreparable fracas—and that up in the darkened land of Franz Mesmer the hand that had so arrogantly carried the divine rights was visibly trembling. . .

Then Chaplain Muller came again, when the evening shadows were beginning to lengthen. "We shall not be disturbed

at this hour," he said. "But if my presence annoys you, I will go. Perhaps you are tired. . ." Marian seized his hand and bade him remain.

"You have been disturbed," he said. "But the British—*Lieber Gott*, how they fight! And so many of our wounded are being brought up here that we may have to use this old place again as a hospital. *Ach*, how they are dying . . . dying!" He sank down and sat with bowed head and clenched hands. "I once thought little of death," he went on in a low, shaking voice; "but I lost a brother, down there, in the first attack on Gaza. He died in my arms. We were David and Jonathan. I loved him, as I have never loved another. I thought his death would kill me. I cannot keep away from you, for yours are the only words of comfort I have heard since he died. *Ach, Fräulein*, let me hear you say that it is as if he had but dropped asleep in one room and awakened in another! It must be, if what you have said is true."

"And it is," she answered gently, bending forward and laying a hand tenderly on his. "And he may have awakened with a clearer sense of life and a better concept of environment than he seemed to have in this state of consciousness. For much of the false belief that goes to make up the human consciousness of material life must be destroyed by the change when the man finds that he still lives. And then, when he begins to learn, as he must some time, that God is Life, many more of his false concepts will be dissolved, and he will learn that no phase of error can ever really rob man of life."

"And I shall see him again, yes, I know I shall."

"Why, he is here, as much as you and I are here. For, in reality, we are all Sons of God, ideas of infinite Mind. And where can we be but in that omnipresent Mind? Your brother did not go away, any more than if he had lain down at your side to sleep. Life is only what we know of God, who *is* Life. And, as Jesus said: *If a man keep my saying, he shall never see death.*"

"*Ach*, I see now that there is nothing in this human life so important as learning just what Jesus meant by his sayings, and keeping them. But how few are even interested in that! If they were, they might overcome death."

"*Your covenant with death shall be annulled*," she said. "And how soon it shall be annulled depends on you. Our thought determines our consciousness: shall we be conscious of Life, or its opposite, death? For we know only what is in our consciousness. Jesus said that to know God was life eternal. It is all a process of *knowing* aright. The human or carnal mind is a bundle of beliefs that rest upon appearances only.

To human sense we appear to have sensation in nerves and strength in muscles and wisdom in the brain, but these appearances are all demonstrably false. Man is not body, nor a mixture of flesh and blood and mind. There is an old historical Bible whose first chapter of Genesis states that 'God created man after His own likeness, in the likeness of *Mind* shaped He him'. What an improvement is this on the St. James version!"

"*Ach,* how little we know!" he sighed.

"And then, after the primal Truth expressed itself in its image, Man, there went up a mist—the supposition appeared to form a negative counterpart of the One Mind. But it is demonstrably only a supposition."

"And I personalized it; I called it the devil, and preached that it had horns and hoofs and a barbed tail. . ."

"It is the negation, ignorance, striking at the Word—and striking now in this war through church and ruler, through men of science, professors, materialists, who blindly accept the testimony of the physical senses as Truth, and slay their brethren for not doing likewise. Church and State have struck through the German Kaiser—and yet, killing men does not kill ideas; the destruction of Britain would not destroy the Word."

It was late when the chaplain took his leave. "*Gott sei Dank,*" he murmured as he bent over her hand, "that you came here. *Ach,* that is selfish! But you have shown me that we are neither Greek nor Gentile, but Sons of the eternal God. And I am very grateful."

Through the darkness that enveloped the Tower came the constant rumble of traffic and the babel of voices from without. If actual evacuation of the city had not begun, at least extensive preparations were being made. At times Marian heard shouts of anger, shrill cries, raucous commands; and with them were mingled at intervals the moans of the wounded who were being transported to a safer place. Marian sat alone beside Cragg: she had not seen the Egyptian since the chaplain came. . .

Of a sudden she heard the bawling of song in the corridor. She sprang to her feet. A German officer, huge of bulk, and swaying under the influence of liquor, came hurrying into the room and bore down upon her. She tried to avoid him, but he seized her hand and held her with a grip of steel.

"Efferbody, fűr hisself!" he shouted in broken English. "You're mine, *Fräulein! Doch!*" He dropped her hand and, whipping out his pistol, wheeled sharply and pointed it at the mouth of the corridor. Marian fell against the wall. Her straining eyes caught sight of the chaplain, hurrying into the room, calling loudly in German to the officer as he came.

Other officers followed. In a moment they were gathered around the girl. The chaplain pushed through them and seized the arm of her burly assailant. The room reverberated with the loud and angry talk. Then the officer, still sputtering volubly, was urged and persuaded by the chaplain until he reluctantly yielded and departed with the others, leaving the chaplain with the girl.

"I felt that you might be in danger," he panted, wiping his damp brow. "I had to come back and see. And I came just in good time. I could not have gotten them to go if I had not told them that you were betrothed to Major Hoeffel and that he was coming to-night. They all fear him. He is such a brute. . . *Ach, Fräulein,* now you *must* escape, you must go, for I have said that you are the major's wife to be! It will be announced all through the city! Then nothing can save you! Come, we must get you away. . ."

"I cannot leave him here." She turned to Cragg.

"But perhaps we can remove him. . . Listen: I will go for help to carry him! I can get you out of the city! I can send trusted friends to you to-morrow . . . perhaps to-night! But you must escape now, or it will be too . . ."

He turned. Marian had uttered a startled cry. Major Hoeffel stood behind the chaplain, with an expression sinister, malicious, diabolical, upon his sharp features. "So-o-o!" he sneered. "You were about to bring the little girl to me, eh, Muller? She has decided to marry me, I understand from my friends on the street. You shall have the pleasure of performing the ceremony at once. Come upstairs, both of you."

Great beads of perspiration poured out upon the chaplain's forehead. His hands shook. He attempted speech, but the words would not come. The major watched him, with a cruel grin.

Then Muller straightened up. His frame became rigid. His lips set, but his face remained deathly pale. "I refuse to marry you, sir," he said in a low, tense voice. "The lady does not wish it."

The major fell back. His mouth flew open. His eyes popped. *"Gott in Himmel!"* he cried, "you . . . you . . . *refuse?"*

"I do."

"You . . . you blockhead! You dull-wit! You crazy hound! Do you know that I overheard you, eh? You were planning the escape of prisoners! It is treason . . . *treason!* You are an enemy of the Emperor, Muller!"

He wheeled about and called loudly. Soldiers came running in from the corridor. "Carry this woman upstairs!" he cried.

Two burly Turks seized Marian and started away with her. "Take Chaplain Muller to headquarters," the major commanded. "He is under arrest!"

He turned and glared down at Cragg. "Have a prisoner sent here," he ordered, "to bury this corpse!"

CHAPTER 20

THE demonstration, in human consciousness, of the Christ was not inaugurated by the Nazarene teacher, but by those who, long ere the recording of human events, began to perceive, however faintly, the reality of Spirit and the consequent deceptiveness of its suppositional opposite, the carnal mind. The early patriarchs of Scripture continued this demonstration, Enoch, Noah, and they who had learned that the Creator is not a magnified mortal, with human attributes and anthropomorphic form. It was continued by Abraham, who forsook the false and degrading gods of Haram and went out to conquer the claims of material selfhood. It was still furthered by Moses, who knew that "the Lord our God is One Lord," Principle, Mind, eternal and omnipresent. It was immeasurably advanced by the man Jesus, who, reflecting the Love that he taught was God, divested his thought of its mortal concepts and realized that death itself would yield to an acquirable knowledge of limitless Life. Its demonstration was still continued by the girl Marian, who had glimpsed the stupendous fact that matter —the admitted origin and locus of all evil, all fear, sin, disease, discord, death—is formed of the miasmatic mist of human thought, and that it fades into innocuousness under the scientifically focused rays of Truth. Like the Master, whom she strove so earnestly to emulate, her demonstration over death began, not when confronted with its hideous manifestation, but long years before, in the perception, as a mere child, that error could have no real place in an infinite cosmos governed by its necessarily infinite and eternal creative Principle.

Had she confused Jesus with God—the pit into which orthodox theology so early fell—her efforts to demonstrate the unity of God would have been stifled at the outset. Had she been deceived by the perniciously mesmeric doctrine that the purpose of the Master was rather to show men how to die than to live, she would have accorded death a place in the infinite economy and thereby rendered futile all subsequent essays to displace it. Had she regarded human birth as actual, rather

than the imitative translation in human consciousness of the divine unfoldment of Mind's idea, Man, she must have at once conceded the inviolability of material law and rendered herself and her concepts of others subject to it. To break the firm belief in the inevitability of death, it early became necessary for her to shatter the concept of human fatherhood. To this end the manner of the Master's advent into human consciousness was as a guiding light through a vale black with mortal ignorance. In this light, as the years went by, she saw the actual fatherhood of God become less mystical, less theoretical, and more and more a fact, urging its own demonstration. And with this came a loosening of the claims of matter, greater freedom from its unprincipled restlessness, and a breaking of the chains of those human passions and relationships which lead deluded mankind into the perpetration of every phase of evil.

But the slightest perception of Truth contains within itself the demand for its demonstration: the kingdom of heaven—harmony—is not in word, but in power. Often the admonition of Madam Galuth came to her: "It is not what you say that counts, but what you *demonstrate!*" And her experience had been of demonstrations made while the shells of evil were bursting around her, while deadly fear sought to drug her with its lethal fumes, and the barrage of aggressive mental suggestions of power opposed to God blocked her advance.

A live truth frightens the timid world: though it listen, yet will it flee in relief back to animality, in gratitude back to the comforting lie. Truth stirs its suppositional opposite, error, to its depths. So Otto Hoeffel had been profoundly stirred by this girl, his captive, and his carnal nature, mortally terrified, had sought safety in bestiality. Marian knew this, had long foreseen it; and as, day by day, she had sat by the dying Cragg, she had striven to realize that the prison, the cross, the tortures devised by the frightened carnal mind, although things apparently seen by human vision, nevertheless did not originate in things apparent to the human senses, but were misconceptions of spiritual realities, formed in and by the mortal mind. She strove to take refuge in the "secret place of the Most High," in that absolute Truth which the Master had said would free mankind from its torturing beliefs in the reality and permanence of matter. Paul had taught that things were not what they seemed—that the evidence of the physical senses was not to be trusted for either good or evil, since physical phenomena do not in any manner originate in "the things which do appear" to these senses. Evil had presented itself—even as did Goliath—as size and might and terribleness in the Teutonic hosts which

had overrun the fields of Europe; yet Christendom had been summoned to meet naught but the mesmerism wielded by the "liar from the beginning". So now, torn from the man she had striven to save—condemned to worse than death—immured in stone and steel—borne by these blinded sons of Esau to the den of the Assyrian to become his toy for a brief day—through it all, Marian strove to know that the only enemy of mankind is the supposition that denies God's omnipotence, and that the death hovering over Alden Cragg was but the denial of the metaphysical fact that Man forever lives as the active reflection of the infinite Consciousness that is God.

"It is not man who is culpable, but the communal mortal mind that so constantly suggests evil to him and acts through him as a channel to accomplish his destruction and that of his associates"—thus had Marian reasoned again and again in her past experience in meeting the false claims of error. So did she seek to regard Otto Hoeffel, as she stood again alone with him in his apartment and faced his awful anger. . .

"I am going to break you! . . . *break* you!" he raged. "For you there has come an end! You are England's spawn! I treat you as a gentleman—you betray my confidence! You seduce the brainless Muller with your undemonstrable philosophy and send him to his death! *Lieb' Gott!* do you think to so seduce *me?* Do I not know that Penberry's influence launched this Palestine campaign? Do I not know that you seduced him? You come here to find Cragg? Bah! you come as Penberry's spy! You hide behind religion! You think I have not followed your career, eh? You carry things with a high hand in Crestelridge, yes! You dispute with the silly rector of St. Jude's; you proclaim your undemonstrable theories from the street corners; you oppose Doctor Roake; you persecute Cragg into the army and pursue him to his death! You think I don't know this? You spurn my honest love! . . ."

He stopped and stood glaring at her. She remained facing him, yet seeing and hearing him not. From the streets came the rumbling noise of traffic, mingling with cries and shouts and hurried talk. From the ancient keep below there arose confused sounds, as if of tramping feet and subdued voices. A murmur of hushed conversation drew nearer, and, as the major turned, several German officers came hurriedly into the apartment, with a terrified-looking Turkish officer in their midst. "Enver!" the latter blurted, his limbs shaking; "he has returned from Hebron! Jerusalem is to be ordered evacuated!" He spoke in French, and his voice shrilled off in a mounting crescendo.

"It is as he reports!" corroborated one of the German

officers, in the same tongue. "And the Turkish troops threaten a massacre of the Germans! Colonel Baum sends for you, Major! It is decided to hold a ball at his headquarters, to occupy the Turkish officers and hold their troops quiet while our preparations for removing the German Military Mission go forward! Bring what ladies you can muster! Our men are out collecting women for the dance! It is of the highest importance! We must make haste!"

The major cursed low as he sprang to collect his documents and effects preparatory to leaving. As he moved he shouted various orders, and several of the officers hurried off to execute them. "It is the dance of death!" he muttered. *"Lieb' Gott!* it is the dance of death! We are *lost!"*

"Von Falkenhayn orders all Americans deported," said one of the remaining officers, looking significantly toward Marian, who had stood, silent, pale, and wrestling with her madly whirling thought.

"She is my wife!" cried the major, catching the innuendo.

"Is it so?" the officer asked of Marian.

She turned. The question seemed to rouse her. "No," she answered.

"Himmel!" the major shouted, exasperated beyond bounds, "she is American, English spawn, and she is my concubine! She goes with me!"

"Then bring her and come!"

"Doch! give us to drink, Otto!"

"Wine! wine!"

"Call the Egyptian!" cried the major. *"Schenk' ein! schenk' ein!"*

Confusion and uproar now filled the apartment. The major summoned the Egyptian, his orderly, servants, soldiers, and feverishly threw his most valuable effects into grips and valises. Some of the officers hurried out and quickly returned with bottles of liquor. Shouts were raised; songs burst forth; and there were curses and foul oaths. An officer seized Marian and drew her down beside him on the divan; others rushed to them and began to struggle for possession of her. The major threw himself upon them and hurled them from her, then seized her hand and rushed her to the exit and into the street, where his car awaited. A moment later they were speeding through the black night. . .

In the streets all was confusion, hurry, but now overlaid with mysterious silence. German engineers were tearing down wires; the loose ends caught in the wheels of the speeding car and drew volleys of oaths from the workmen. Soldiers, German and Turkish, glared at one another with feverish, threaten-

ing eyes . . . a stone hurled in their midst would have precipitated a massacre. Panic-stricken inhabitants jammed the narrow thoroughfares . . . some were left crushed against walls in lifeless, shapeless masses. Fear dominated the mind and palzied the reason. Machine guns and cannon of small bore were being dragged into the gates and planted upon roofs and among houses. British prisoners were being herded through the streets with burdens of explosives to mine the principal buildings and leave the sacred city an empty shell. . .

The house to which Marian and the major were driven lay in the oldest part of the city, down past the site of Herod's palace and close to the first wall. In the early centuries of the Christian era it might have been a Roman palace. Doubtless it had been restored and rebuilt many times, but the original design must have been closely adhered to, and probably much of the rare marble and exquisite mosaic work remained quite as it was in the days of the Cæsars. During the ride thither, through the rough, narrow, thronged streets, the girl had been almost oblivious of her surroundings. The major had sat in sodden silence beside her. And when the car stopped and she was lifted down and led through the ancient portal, her thought was very far from that of which her physical senses appeared to be giving such vivid testimony. The meaning of this function which she was thus forced to grace by her presence—this preliminary expression of the abandoned thought that was so soon to become the guiding motive of millions of deluded victims of the shattered dream of *Weltmacht*—had not impressed her preoccupied mentality. But as she crossed the threshold the crash of a military band startled her, and she stopped, shuddering. The major grasped her arm and pushed her forward, through the ancient *atrium*, past a ruined fountain, and up a winding marble stairway to a great upper room, garishly decorated, brilliantly lighted, and thronged with a heterogeneous mob of humanity, seemingly gathered from every corner of the world. A low, cynical laugh broke from the major as they entered. "It is the dance of death!" he repeated thickly. His voice was bitter as dregs, and the laugh that followed his words had a hollow, despairing sound.

Shrills of delight greeted the couple when they appeared in the doorway, and a dozen officers, civilians, and women of all grades—the latter in khaki, cotton, or silk, garishly rouged and bedizened—rushed upon them with delirious cries and a medley of languages. The major attempted to cling to Marian, but a stout, drunken officer tore her from his grasp and whirled off with her across the uneven tiled floor. He did not dance: he plunged like a maddened bull. The tempo of the music

rapidly increased. The officer stumbled and fell prone. Another tossed aside his partner and seized Marian before she could catch her breath. Again she was whisked away, colliding at every step with pushing, straining, yelling bourgeois, with German, Turk, and Austrian of every rank, who were tearing madly about the room with their arms around the wives and daughters of bankers, warriors, tradesmen, gamblers, or the *houris* and demimondaines, the libertines and backwash of the alleys and scums. There was no joy, no real gaiety manifested in that saturnalia; it was but an orgy of defiance, a manifestation of spiritual hopelessness, the madness of desperation that follows upon dashed ambitions, lost fortunes, wrecked lives, broken nerves, and seared brains. To these insane revellers the Book of the Future was now closed, the Damoclean sword was falling, their mirth was lamentation, their gay music a sob. This wild night alone remained to them: they would eat, they would drink, they would revel, then miserably die, with the last dregs of sensual pleasure souring in their starved souls!

So rudely had Marian been torn from Cragg in the gloomy prison of Antonia and plunged into this mad riot that there had been little opportunity for ordered thought. It was all but a medley of conflicting sense-impressions. Yet she tried to know—tried to cling to the saving fact—that there, where these revolting physical manifestations appeared to be, right there was the real spiritual idea, perfect, eternal, regardless of and untouched by the fleeting, changing, material concept of it. Through it all she strove to say: "Father, I thank Thee!"—to live her gratitude for the great metaphysical truth that nothing perceived by the five physical senses has a real existence.

Then she felt herself caught from the arms of a galloping young Austrian lieutenant and borne into an adjoining room. She was again with the major, who had exchanged the orgy of the dance for that of the gaming table. Everywhere in this smaller room were roulette tables, baccarat, and *rouge et noir*. And there were other tables, stacked high with food and wine. Corks were popping, glasses clinking, coarse laughter and shrill raillery rising through the thick veil of tobacco smoke. On a dias at the rear of the room two dancing girls were gamboling about in mock pretense of eluding a pair of scantily clad and befuddled satyrs.

The major tossed a handful of bills upon the roulette table. The ball spun, clicked to a stop, and the bills were scooped up by the *croupier*. The major laughed raucously and snapped his fingers. "Bah! to-night—who knows?—the world shall end!" He wheeled, still clinging to Marian's arm, and drew her away. "I have *you!*" he cried; "I am *rich!*"

Through the wild pack of humanity he threaded his way with the girl to a small door that led out upon a tessellated corridor, palm-lined and dimly lighted, with divans and settles placed at intervals along the stone wall. Upon one of these he fell and drew her down beside him. "It is the *Götterdämmerung!*" he muttered; "it is the dance of death!" motioning back toward the great hall. His eyes were big and his words came feverishly. "But," throwing his arms about her, "you and I, we shall live! we shall live!"

She started up, but he pulled her back. *"Liebschen!"* he cried hoarsely, "the world, the old world that you and I knew before this hellish war, it is gone! My nation is sinking with it . . . the German Empire dies! But I shall live! . . . and you with me! We shall go back to . . . America! . . . *Ach, Liebschen,* if you could prove your so interesting philosophy, you could save . . .!"

She struggled from his close embrace and got to her feet. He rose and gripped her by the arms. "Cragg is dead . . . but he could not be saved!" he cried. "Though he had lived, yet he would be shot! . . . *Ach,* too many of us know how his father screwed the German merchants down and bled them of their money! . . . how the Turkish tobacco growers groaned under his oppression! The sins of the father would be visited on the son! Thank your God that he is already dead! . . .

"Look, *Liebschen,* down this corridor is a door; we will escape through it . . . and then, away! away from this hell-hole of horror and treachery and death. . . I love you, *Liebschen;* I cannot lose you to the Turks! *Lieb' Gott!* but I have had trouble enough to protect you from them already! . . ."

His words were drowned in a burst of laughter. He released Marian and sprang to his feet. A noisy, chattering group of revellers came rushing out upon the corridor.

"Bon Dieu!" shrilled a coarse-featured, half-naked woman, as she dashed down upon the major and flung her arms about his neck. "You slip away with your little charmer and we starve! She shall taste my knife!" She stood back and stared mockingly at Marian. "Poof! she is not half so pretty as I!"

"Who is she, Major?" and "Present us, sly one!" chorused the men as they crowded about. *"Gott!* what a figure."

"It is the prisoner he keeps in Antonia! The little American. . ."

"Amerika!" bellowed a bulking German officer, pushing rudely forward. *"Gott strafe Amerika! Gott strafe . . ."*

"Hold, Baltzer!" shouted the major, confronting the speaker, his own face white with anger and fear. "This lady . . . she is my wife! Tell them that it is so!" he cried, turning to Marian.

The revellers fell back with exclamations of astonishment. Marian looked beseechingly into the anxious face of the major, then into the grinning, leering ones before her. "No," she said, shaking her head, "it is not so."

A shout broke from the rabble, and they swarmed forward again. "Ha! they quarrel, the little lovers!"

"But she is wise not to waste herself on the major, when there are so much better ones! Look at me, pretty one!"

"America has thrown you over, Major!" bawled a fat, puffing Teuton. "Now the rest of us have a chance! Take me. . ." He seized Marian's arm.

"No, she's mine!" Another threw his arms around the girl.

"No! to the highest bidder!"

"Bon Dieu! a raffle, a raffle!" the coarse-featured woman cried.

The suggestion ran through the crowd like an infection. The raging major was pounced upon and held pinioned, while, amid shouts and coarse badinage, Marian was seized and dragged back into the gaming room. There she was received with further demonstrations of glee. The dias was swept clear of its motley dancers, and the girl placed upon it, facing the excited crowd. A big Turkish officer with hideously repulsive features clambered up beside her and, with his heavy paw on her shoulder, announced himself as auctioneer.

Bids were shouted; soon they were thrown fast and furious. Bedlam quickly broke over the room. Shouts and gibes filled the air. Crowds poured in from the hall beyond, attracted by the unwonted noise. Marian faced them, white and trembling. And yet there ceased not to run through her thought the refrain: *"Thy God whom thou servest continually, He will deliver thee."* But she applied its comforting assurance, not to herself, but to the man from whom she had been torn for this mocking spectacle. "He will deliver thee, Alden . . . He will deliver . . . He . . ." A deep sigh broke from her dry lips. She was unspeakably weary; the battle had been long. . .

The shouts increased with the frenzied bidding. The girl was good to look upon, and lustful eyes glittered and bulged. The excitement waxed greater. Quarrels at length broke out; epithets were hurled; blows were exchanged. The packed mass of struggling, drink-crazed, despairing humanity began surging angrily, menacingly back and forth.

Then pandemonium seized the helm and steered them into mania. They fell to fighting, to striking, gouging, yelling, cursing. Up against the dias they crowded; then upon it. The girl's clothing was all but torn from her. The huge Turk, the girl's auctioneer, beat the mob back with fist and boot. They

swarmed hissing upon him. He evaded them, seized Marian in his great arms, and fought a bloody way to a door that stood behind the dias. Through this he thrust the girl. Again he faced the mob. Then, with a final fusillade of blows upon his maddened pursuers, he made a swift, cat-like movement, jammed the door shut against their faces, and threw the antique bolt. His clothing was fairly stripped from his body; his head streamed blood; but an exultant leer sat upon his repulsive features. A moment for breath, and he had the girl under an arm and started down the corridor. . .

But from behind a large palm a form arose. A bludgeon hissed through the air and fell crashing full upon his head, dropping him like an ox. A dark hand grasped Marian's. The girl gave a cry: she recognized the Egyptian woman. . .

Then consciousness fled.

CHAPTER 21

WHEN her eyes opened Marian found herself looking through a heavy Turkish veil into the black night. She was sitting in an angle of the old wall, huddled close to the Egyptian woman, who held her hand tightly. When she stirred the woman bent over her and spoke rapidly in a whisper. "Quiet, little flower! I have been waiting for you to wake. I could not carry you further. If you are strong now, we must go."

Marian struggled to her feet and stood swaying. The woman stood up beside her and threw an arm about her waist. "Keep the veil on, then you will not be known. They will follow us. It cannot be more than ten minutes since we left them. Come!"

Marian passed a hand across her brow. Her thought slowly cleared. Then she started away with the woman. But presently she halted. Though unfamiliar with the city, she felt a sense of erring direction. "Where are we going?" she asked in a shaking voice.

"To a friend. You will be safe there."

"No! I must go back. . ."

"You cannot. The major will go there."

"I must go! Alden . . ."

"He is dead. The major ordered a report made of his death. A prisoner had come to get the body before I left. By this time he is buried."

Dead! *Buried!* The fell words smote upon her, and her knees gave way. She seized the Egyptian's arm to keep from

falling. An outcry died in her throat. The black night swept over her in a crushing flood. She seemed to sink through the sable waves, with satanic laughter ringing in her ears. It was the triumphant mockery of the last enemy. . .

"I can get you out of the city and . . ." the Egyptian was saying in a voice that seemed to come from afar.

Marian caught herself; the woman's words had saved her from oblivion. "I . . . must . . . go . . . to him!" she gasped.

"Little flower, it would be worse than death for you!"

"No! no! Do not hold me!" Marian tore herself from the woman's grasp and darted away into the darkness.

She had no idea of direction; the pavement was rough and broken; but she clung to the wall, with one hand against it to guide her, and a mental hand stretched out to that unseen Guide whose inerrancy she had essayed to prove to a mocking world. With the slow passing of the first stunning effects of the ill tidings her mentality began to clear. Strangely, it appeared to her to become detached—she seemed to see it like an arena prepared for combat. Dimly she sensed the drawing up of the lists, the defiant challenges, the loud boasts of the combatants—and then the clash, with death hurling itself in venomous fury against Life, and supported by minions and equerries, the supposedly irrefutable testimony of the physical senses, the seemingly unbreakable weapons of material evidence, of untold ages of beliefs accepted without resistance by countless millions whose moldering graves crowd the fair earth. So real, so tangible, did the combat present itself to her mental gaze that she stumbled, sank to her knees, then pulled herself up and stood clinging to the broken wall. . .

Then a hand was laid upon her arm, and she turned to find the Egyptian again at her side. "Come," the woman whispered hoarsely; "I will take you back." Together they started away and plunged down a sloping alley, where they were swallowed by the devouring gloom.

A heavy pall lay over the embattled city. In the shrouded streets, where long since had echoed the footsteps of the Man of Sorrows, eerie forms glided like dead memories of the ghostly past. A cold rain drizzled through the murk; mud lay upon the pavements and clung to their feet with hindering embrace. Marian and the Egyptian, hand in hand, crept through the blackness in silence, unmolested, and gained again the ancient Tower.

As the girl rushed from the corridor into the big room she uttered a cry: Cragg lay there as she had left him. . .

Then she stopped. In the sallow light she saw a man kneeling beside the cot, his head buried in his hands. A shovel and

pick lay on the stone floor near him. Marian's heart ceased to beat; then it leaped and pounded wildly. She plunged forward. The kneeling figure moved, slowly rose, and turned, tall, spectral, ghastly, to face her.

For an instant the two stood staring at each other mutely. Then the man spoke: and his words were borne on sepulchral tones. "It is Alden Cragg! . . . Dead! . . . And, God of my fathers, *I . . . killed . . . him!*"

A gasp broke from the girl. Despite the welter of her thought she recognized the man. It was David Barach!

The Egyptian hurried up with a lighted candle, which she thrust into the man's face. *"Mon Dieu!"* she exclaimed, "you are a prisoner, sent here to bury the body?" And her question was couched in perfect English, although the fact then made no impress upon the girl.

Nor did Barach seem to hear her. He had turned again to the cot. Again he sank beside it. "God of my fathers!" he sobbed, "his blood is on my head! His blood! . . . his blood! I am a murderer! . . . a murderer! . . ."

To Marian it was as if a steel band were clamped around her head and being drawn tighter, ever tighter, until the awful pressure must soon crush her skull and scatter the raging, swelling tumult of thought that seemed pent within. She stood benumbed, her eyes riveted upon the suffering man who rocked back and forth on his knees by the cot, pouring out the agony of his riven soul.

"I shot him! I followed him from Crestelridge to kill him! I thought *she* would want it! God of my fathers! Now she points her finger at me and calls me a murderer. . ."

Marian dropped down gasping beside him. "You! . . . Then *you* shot him? . . . Oh, God forgive you! . . ."

The Egyptian stood regarding the scene in blank astonishment. Through the shadows Marian's hand stole out and found Cragg's. The miasmatic mist that went up from the earth, that came drifting down through the mildewed corridors, seemed to envelop her with its subtle poison. The victim of hate lay prostrate before her, unmoved by the agony of the suffering penitent who had lent himself its pliant tool. Barach's low moans voiced the girl's own unfathomable agony. His wails echoed dismally through the empty chambers of her own desolated soul. *Dead!* And she was hanging from the cross with the abandoned Nazarene, her mission, like his, defeated, ridiculed. . .

"What doest thou here, Elijah?"

She turned her head, as if to a voice. Her torn soul sprang to answer the Unseen. *"I have been very jealous for the Lord*

God of hosts: for the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword; and I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life, to take it away". . .

Of a sudden she leaped to her feet with a piercing cry. "He is *not* dead! He lives! He *lives!*"

The Egyptian fell back; the candle slipped from her shaking hand and clattered upon the floor. Barach raised his drawn, stained face in dumb hopelessness. Marian seemed surcharged with a mighty, invisible, intangible power. "Go!" she cried; "leave me . . . alone . . . with him!"

The Egyptian stood open-mouthed for an awe-filled moment. Then, silently, and with a look in her face that indicated a depth of comprehension as yet unvoiced, she took Barach's arm, urged him to his feet, and led him slowly from the room. The heavy door swung softly shut behind them, and the girl was left alone in the dungeon with death.

Through the deep windows of the old Tower the darkness poured steadily, like the unstemmed flood of error which, from the beginning, has sought to drown the Word. Alone stood the girl who, in meek consecration, had relinquished the world that she might find the Christ, which, finding, she would reflect to a dying humanity. Terror rose up through the night about her in myriad hideous shapes. Death leered exultant at her over the low cot. A fate more loathsome than death was driving upon her from without. Failure of her life-mission assailed her in lurid suggestions that boomed through her mind like the roar of cannon. So, twenty centuries before, had these same enemies assailed the Nazarene as he drooped from the tree, beyond these walls, and grappled with death.

She turned. Before her lay Alden Cragg, waiting, as mortal mind has lain long years waiting for the troubling of Bethesda's waters. But Truth had again caused sin to betray itself: Marian knew now that it was Barach's deadly hatred that had struck Cragg down. And hatred is the suppositional opposite of the Love that is Life.

She did not hate Barach—nay, thus to personalize the error would but render real it and its effects. To forgive him as but the channel of animal magnetism's lying suggestions—for thus the Master forgave—and to love the real man as the Son of God, would neutralize the error and lift its victim out of the sensuality that is itself death. It was to her all a part of the unreal dream, for in God's universe there could be no murder. Again had the Jew sought to destroy the Word by killing its keeper. The "one lie" that had urged Caiaphas to slay the Christ-truth had again struck to kill him in whom it should appear. Yet only through the Christ is the Jew saved. . .

Reality seems always to have its shadow in unreality. Because the mental concepts of the mortal mind miss the mark, they die. Yet death is not real, and Man does not die.

What dies, then? What but the human concept, from the beginning so mistakenly called "man"? And what, then, is human life? What can it be but—as has been aptly said—"the symbolizing of Truth's destruction of human ignorance"? "There is only one good," said Diogenes Laertius, "namely, knowledge; and only one evil, namely, ignorance." And Marian had learned, through fear and trembling, that evil, error, is not real, but a negation, the absence of knowledge, and therefore ignorance itself. To know God is Life eternal. Men die because they do not know enough to live.

Was it, then, the Nazarene's knowledge of Life as eternal Principle that broke the chains of this mortal belief and demonstrated the indestructibility of the real Man? Small wonder that, knowing this, he could deny the reality of death, even while confronted by its glaring material evidence. And the girl knew as now she walked with Alden Cragg through the shrouded valley that she must demonstrate this same knowledge of God as immutable Life, or witness the externalization there before her of its hideous opposing belief. "If he sleep he shall do well," the knowing world would comment, and triumphantly point to its graves and its tombs. But the testimony of physical sense has been proved to be only the beliefs and opinions of the human mind, for even the world's philosophers have shown unmistakably that men see, feel, hear, taste, and smell only their own thoughts, and these but in belief.

But how to make such vital metaphysical knowledge practical? Yet Jesus made it eminently so, and he did it again and again by denying the testimony of sense, while affirming the allness of his Father, God. For Life and death, he well knew, cannot dwell side by side if both be real, since Truth and error cannot both be true. Good and evil cannot both be real and each primal. Always Truth precedes, and error dogs its steps with its snarling demand for acknowledgment. And those who acknowledge it are by it devoured.

To God—and often the girl had reasoned thus—no one can die, for the infinite Mind that created all that is real sees always His own reflection, which can never fade while He endures. If man really lives, he can never die. Thus reasoned Paul; and thus for him was death swallowed up in victory. The passing from consciousness of the human concept misnamed man is, for it, death. Yet nothing dies, and death is not proved. And this human concept is seen to be but a mental thing—not Man!—existing only by consentaneous human consent and

belief. Such belief has decreed that it must die; and forthwith, obeying this law, it takes its sorrowful departure—only to witness to the stupendous truth that *there is no death!*

Again, as often before, Marian knew that, though it wore the terrifying mask of death, she was dealing with but a mental thing. That erroneous concept could not form in her consciousness and manifest there if she could but control the thoughts, the beliefs, the human opinions from which such concepts are fashioned. And if it appeared to be already formed within her consciousness, it might be destroyed by the solvent action of the facts regarding it, for a lie cannot live in the light of Truth.

The shadows deepened. The noises from the street died away. Silence, tense, ominous, hung over the ruined Tower. Death stalked along its dank corridors and into the murky prison where Marian now sat; it came fresh from the fields below, where, because of mortal hatred of Truth, it had garnered a harvest abundant and rich. And fear trailed in its wake, "the terror by night".

But fear leans on the staff of belief in personality. It rests always on error, for one cannot fear that which is real, since the real is the good. Its support is ever in material systems of thought. Remove this false support and face death with Truth, and the gaunt spectre must perforce slink back to its fens and acknowledge that the thousands who have yielded their sense of life in this carnage of hate have not gone on, but are still where they were. For them, the dream has gone out, vanished; yet nothing has happened to them, nothing really taken place. The mortal mind expresses itself in matter; yet demonstrably matter does neither live nor die. Mortal mind weaves it and fashions its forms on its own looms of thought, animates it, controls it with its erroneous beliefs, and mourns that it cannot sustain it on its foundation of error. The girl knew, as she faced again the Terror, that she herself had died, died, died, many times in the years that were gone; knew that she had passed out of beliefs and their conditions to which she could never return; knew that she had risen above claims of sense that could now touch her no more, even as Paul had died daily to material belief and the testimony of the five senses. She knew that it had all taken place in consciousness; and she knew that her thought determined her consciousness. She knew that man is not born of matter and mind; knew, too, that the dead cannot be raised until the true meaning of birth is realized, for the belief that man dies is inseparably linked to the belief that he is born. She knew that until the false education regarding youth and age, growth, decay, is annihi-

lated by the right education as to the Allness of the Mind that is God, and the incurability of disease and the inevitableness of death be thereby driven back to their origin, the "one lie" about the Creator and His eternal idea, Man, death must endure. But to do this she knew she must plunge into that spiritual realm of reality which the physical senses cannot cognize and of which they give no testimony whatsoever, but an incessant denial.

And was this possible to her? She knew that of her own self she could do nothing; yet she would watch with the Christ an hour, yea, until the fourth watch, for "the eternal stars shine out as soon as it is dark enough" . . . and the Christ, the Truth about all things, walks the waves of error when they are highest. The hour of demonstration was upon her. The time had come when, humanly alone, she must take all the understanding which she possessed and *stand*. She knew she must "take no thought what ye shall say," knew that "in that same hour it shall be given you". And, standing on that knowledge, the spiritual truths that she had learned, that she had in part demonstrated, came to her as the spiritual weapons needful in this hour of combat.

From the distant corners of the world that black night there streamed incessantly upward the wailing query: "Is it well with the child?" And parent and kin were answering with a sobbing "No." They were not laying their dead upon the prophet's bed, but were still seeking unto the physicians, the professors, the material sources from which can come no remedy for suffering and woe. But Marian had answered in the affirmative.

The Giver of life cannot be the giver of death; nor can Life be in or of matter and its evanescent forms. Mind is the infinite Creator, and it must have its eternal expression in ideas partaking of its own eternal nature. And the creative Mind is Life, independent of death and the limitations of matter. The Shunammite's faith was Marian's, a faith that had flowered into spiritual understanding. Though the striking prophecy of Daniel refer to her and her age, though "some of them of understanding shall fall, to try them, and to purge, and to make them white, even to the time of the end," yet she thanked her God for the trial and rose thereby to such heights that she could cry with joy: "It *is* well!" . . .

She had cried aloud, and the responding echo of her voice boomed through the stone chamber and down the vaulted halls beyond. It startled her; she raised her head and sat listening. The still form on the cot now seemed to her a thing detached—it was not Alden Cragg, could not be, never had been! All, herself, her universe, had become impersonal, and she no longer

saw with human vision; she was no longer materially environed; she looked not out through the prison windows, but into them from infinity; to her the real Man did not lie there with the dew of death upon his brow, for the sum total of death she saw to be a mental belief, as false as the opposite belief that Man is born into a thing of matter and mind; the testimony that had doomed Alden Cragg to extinction she now knew was cruelly, foully false! . . .

She sprang to her feet. She knew that she was not alone, for the infinitude of God was crowding upon her. A rushing sense of gratitude swept over her. Her bosom heaved. Her eyes flooded. Her hand went out and hovered over the form on the cot. "Father," she breathed, "I thank Thee that at last I *know* that there is nothing between Thee and him!"

She turned and bent quickly over the prostrate man. . .

* * * * * *

He had appeared to himself to lie for some time with eyes open, as if detached from his body. Then he moved an arm; but a great pain shot through him, and he let it fall. He turned his head slowly. He saw himself in a small stone room, lying on a pallet of straw, and he noted that his body was swathed in cloth. His limbs were free and unshackled. Light streamed in through a narrow grated window. Then the silence was broken by a sound. He turned his head again, and saw Miriam entering the doorway.

She came swiftly to him and knelt trembling at his side. "My Crassius," she cried excitedly; "you *live!*"

He lay motionless, looking up at her. Though he remembered her, yet now she seemed transfigured. Her face was illumined. Her eyes shone with a new light. "I have seen him! *Him!*" she whispered in tones of awe, as if answering his unvoiced query.

She sat back and looked off into space. He watched her, vaguely wondering. "I saw him in the Temple," she mused softly. "He had just opened the eyes of one born blind. Think of it! Oh, how great he was! His hair is blond; it falls about his shoulders, and is parted in the middle. His forehead is so smooth, so serene, without marks or wrinkles. His skin is fair, and his cheeks pink. His beard is like his hair, and parted the same. . .

"But it is his gaze, oh, his wondrous gaze, that holds men! His eyes are blue, and big, and deep. Wisdom, frankness, truth, shine from them. And they pierce the people through and through. I heard him speak. It was the voice of heaven. . .

"But, my Crassius, I neglect you! Yet I can scarce think

of aught but *him!* . . . Your wounds, O Crassius, they mend, and you will live, I know. Especially do I know it now, since I have seen and heard *him.* I interceded with Procula for you, for they had left you to die. She bade me nurse you back to life; and so I have, these many days. And soon you will be whole again. Then Procula has promised to make you her *sandalio,* to have charge of the lady's sandals. You may no longer leave the palace, but I, O my Crassius, will be your eyes and ears and feet, and will bring you news of him whom now I know to be the Christ. But—" and her voice was tinged with anxiety "—even as I entered, it was reported that he had been apprehended, and would be taken before Pilate. But Pilate must needs set him free. . ."

"Set him free!" the slave echoed. His dormant memory was alive again. "Go," he cried, "and when he is set at liberty, ask him to make me free."

"Thou wert free now, O Crassius, if only thou couldst *know* it," she returned gently. "And," she added, "forget thyself. For the master teaches that those who think so constantly of themselves shall be beaten with many stripes."

For some moments they both remained silent. Then the girl continued. "The Master's doctrine—I have learned, O Crassius, what it is. His wondrous power that enables him to raise the dead, I know now what it is. Love, O Crassius, love! He loves our Father God more deeply than children love their parents. He loves his fellow men more tenderly, truly, than a strong man loves the maiden of his choice. It is such love as this world ne'er has seen before. And thereby does he teach that God *is* Love. Those who can love thus will never fear. And when we cease to fear there ceases to be aught of evil for us, I am persuaded. If you but loved as he teaches men to love, O Crassius, your bonds would break. . . But eat and drink now what I have brought. And fear not, for through me Procula has o'erlooked your disobedience."

She took her departure, and the slave was again alone. As he lay, he strove to piece together the stray bits that memory so grudgingly yielded him. How long he lay thus, he knew not, for time had ceased to be; but at length his mental struggles were again interrupted by Miriam's return.

She came in hurriedly and fell upon her knees beside his pallet. Her face was white and drawn, and her body shook. "My Crassius!" she cried; "they say—the wildest rumors!—but Procula's agitation confirms it—that the Master was taken before Pilate whilst I was here with you; that he has been condemned, and is even now on the way to Golgotha! It cannot be! Oh, I would fly to him, but that Pilate has forbid that

any of his household should leave the palace this day! But—he has *all* power, for he is the Christ! They cannot kill him! It were not possible! If he permits them to fix him to the cross, he will come down and confound them! Oh, Procula is nigh unto death with fear! Pilate paces the rooms like a disembodied spirit! It is the end of all things, I know! O my Crassius, this will prove if God indeed be Love!"

Long she talked, now confident, now fearful; yet of it all he comprehended little, except that the one who of all others might set him free was perhaps meeting his own death, leaving him, the slave, in bondage forever. The thought maddened him. He got to his feet, and, but for the girl, would have sought escape. Then, under her gentle words he at length again became calm. "I am working with thee and for thee, O my Crassius," she strove to comfort. "Do thou work, as the Master bids, to *deny* thyself and to *know* his Father as he doth know Him."

She departed when the shadows had begun to gather, and left him pondering her words. He lay calm, and now, strangely, with a great sense of peace upon his thought. And as he lay he seemed to himself to be undergoing a change. . .

Of a sudden a great wind swept through the prison in a long, wailing moan. The straw was blown from his pallet; the cloths were torn from his body. He sat bolt upright, for the moment forgetful of self. Instantly the day was blotted out. Inky darkness submerged all things. He sat stunned. But terror spurred him, and he got to his knees, stood up, then started away, crying loudly.

But scarce had he taken a step when a terrific explosion rent the air. The massive walls of his prison rocked with the shock—they parted before his bursting eyes, tottered, and fell crashing around him in a crumbling mass of débris.

He did not realize that he remained unhurt. Panic seized him, and he broke into a run. In a trice he was in the dark street. There, at length, he discovered himself one of a yelling, scrambling, terrified, maddened throng.

"It *was* the Christ!" he heard on all sides.

"The very Son of God!"

"His blood is upon us!"

"Oh, woe is us! woe! woe!" . . .

Through the fearful gloom he saw multitudes beating their breasts and crying aloud. He sped from them terrified. The streets appeared to twist and buckle as he fled; buildings swayed, nodded, and fell with deafening roars. Lightning flashed from the black sky overhead; thunder split and crashed. He saw Scribes, Pharisees, Sadducees, tumbling madly over one

another in their wild flight through the pall of darkness. Priests passed him, holding their robes aloft and crying anathemas upon those who blocked their way. Spectral things flew past him, wrapped in moldering grave clothes. Demoniac shrieks pierced his bleeding ears. Pandemonium had gripped the city. Chaos held the reins and drove the senseless people headlong to destruction. . .

Whither he fled, he knew not. He had lost all sense of body; he seemed to himself a disincarnate spirit, driven by the howling wind. How long he ran from the accursed city, he might not know. Perhaps it was hours; yet time was no more. That he outdistanced the maddened multitude he knew at length, for silence closed in about him, and he saw himself alone.

He glanced upward. The heavens were now clear and studded with stars. He looked before him, and saw the shimmering waters of a sea. He halted on the shore. What, then, was he fleeing?

A thought smote him like a blow: Miriam, who had sought to save him, was back there! She remained with the Christ! And the Christ was there, in the blackness of human sin, meeting humanity's problems alone! But he, the slave, was seeking safety in flight! Safety for what? For his sense of self. But Miriam and the Christ had no thought of self. . .

Self! He laughed. Self was the coward! Self was the deserter of the Son of God! Self was the slave to the gods of matter! It was this Self that was his mortal enemy! It was this Self that he would be rid of! . . . Ah, he would go back, he would fight for the Christ and let this Self be slain for the Master! What mattered now his own freedom, so be it that the Christ whom he had stoned be saved? . . .

But how did he recall that he had stoned the Christ? Was the link of memory now restored? Was the continuity of associations reëstablished? He remembered . . . God above! he remembered that there were others who were stoning the Christ! And he would save them this fearful torment into which he had fallen! . . .

He turned; he would go back and fight for the abandoned Christ! He would not beg the Christ to free him, but to send to the mesmerized creatures still dwelling in the place from which he now was conscious he had come, and bid them turn from the path that was leading them straight thither! He *must* go back to the Christ!

He again broke into a run—but checked himself abruptly: a lion had risen in his path! He recognized it: the beast was his human concept of Self! He hesitated. He was unarmed! . . . Then he clenched his fists and strode toward it.

The lion vanished, and where it had stood he now saw Roman soldiers descending upon him. Fear again seized him. He had been flogged, he remembered . . . this time it would be unto death! His blood curdled. He wheeled to flee—caught himself as his thought turned again to those whom he would beg the abandoned Christ to save. But who were they? And where?

On came the soldiers. They symbolized death, death in awful torture—yet would he not abandon those still indistinctly remembered ones who were so blindly hastening thither. He straightened up and moved resolutely toward the soldiers.

Then he saw Self fall from him as a tattered garment, saw it roll down the hill and into the sea. And as he watched it he knew . . . God above! *he knew that that hypnotic belief of Self was Alden Cragg!*

And he knew then that those whom he would save were the blinded worldlings of Crestelridge, the Whittiers, the Telluses, Blacks, Kerls, Sayor, Roake! Their names rained upon him now! It was for them that he was now seeking the Christ! And as he went toward the soldiers he smiled. . .

But a great voice rang loudly in his ears, and he halted. "God is your life! God is your life!" A light seemed to glow behind him, whose effulgence embraced him as it were a cloud. He saw the soldiers stop, blench with fear, then throw down their arms and flee back over the hill. He turned. A great white light stood out upon the sea. The wind roared terrifyingly, and the waves rolled mountain high. The light moved over them and toward him. And as it moved he saw it take shape. A cry burst from him. He sank to his knees and stretched out his arms to it. Jesus, he now knew, was hanging from the cross, but not the Christ!

On it drew. And before it the winds and waves dropped into calm. He buried his head in his hands. . .

"Arise! Behold, thou art made whole!"

"Alden! Arise!" The voice rushed in upon him like a blast through opened doors. *"God is your life!"* . . .

His eyes slowly opened, and he looked up into the face of Marian Whittier. He had come from the tomb, still bound with the cerements of death.

CHAPTER 22

THE breath rattled in his throat as he struggled for voice; then it issued, hollow, void. Marian's heart leaped madly. Her body shook. She seized the hand that he stretched forth so feebly and drew him to a sitting posture. Then she sank trembling to the floor beside him, still clinging to his hand.

"Miriam!" His eyes roved wildly. His voice came from unearthly realms. "Miriam! . . . the *Christ!*" . . .

At that instant came a sound of hurrying feet, and a loud, angry exclamation. Marian sprang up and whirled about. Major Hoeffel came rushing to her. "You, here, with this corpse!" he cried. "Come away! They will be here any moment. . . *God in heaven!*" His voice shot up in a piercing cry, then dropped back and strangled in his palsied throat. Cragg had risen, his tall form towering slowly upward in the dim, flickering candlelight against a background of black shadows like a dead giant rising from his grave. The major froze in his tracks. Cold perspiration burst out over him. His knees sagged. . .

The kitchen door flew open, and the Egyptian and Barach, startled by the major's sharp cry, rushed into the room. At sight of Cragg, swaying unsteadily on his feet, Barach shrieked wildly, wheeled, and madly fled. The Egyptian halted, stared for a moment with bulging eyes and working features, then came slowly forward and thrust her shaking candle up into Cragg's ashen face. The silence of death again fell upon them all, and they stood like wax images in the yellow light.

Then Cragg sank down upon the cot. The act broke the awful strain. From Marian's lips burst a prayer: "My God, I thank Thee!" She turned to Cragg—but stood suddenly still. The man's hair, once raven black, was now white as drifted snow!

The Egyptian turned and crept softly away, shaking as she went. At the mouth of the corridor she stood for a moment, listening. Reassured, she glided noiselessly from door to window, peering into the still night, listening with head cocked on one side, and at length, with her candle bobbing in the spectral darkness like a marshlight through funereal mists, she disappeared into the kitchen.

Cragg raised his sunken eyes. "I . . . have seen . . . the *Christ!*" Then speech halted.

The major fell back. Terror shook him. Deathly nausea

seized him. His knees smote together. His body sagged. Yet the awful sight held him fascinated.

Cragg was rising again. "I see it . . . I see it . . . now," he spoke slowly in a low, trembling, awed voice. "He shot me . . . Barach! But the Christ called me back. . ."

His eyes turned to Marian, who stood trembling before him. For a moment he stared at her searchingly. Then a great change came into his face. "Marian!" he suddenly cried in a loud voice; "Marian Whittier, what are you doing *here?*"

The tension snapped, and the girl burst into tears and buried her face in her hands. "Oh, my God," she sobbed, "I thank Thee! I thank Thee!"

The Egyptian came from the kitchen, bearing in her hands a bowl of broth. This she pressed upon Cragg. He regarded it mechanically for a moment, then took it and permitted the woman to force him down again upon the cot. "I am hungry," he murmured; "hungry. I have come . . . a long way."

The major, who had seemed to struggle as one struggles to break the spell of a frightful dream, tottered forward and dropped upon the cot beside Cragg. For some moments he sat eagerly watching the returned one eat. Then, as he began to recover poise, he reached out cautiously and touched Cragg's arm. "Tell me," he said at length in a quavering voice, "do you know where you are? Your wound . . . do you suffer?"

Cragg shook his head slowly. "No . . . I have been in Jerusalem . . . with . . . *him.*" He looked at the major. The latter's uniform seemed to impress him, and a light came into his eyes. "I am a prisoner. I see now," he said. "Yes, I remember." Again his voice fell, and he sat silent and abstracted for some time. The others waited, scarce breathing. Then, looking up at the girl: "Marian! Marian!" he exclaimed. "Is it a dream? Are you really here?"

Fear fled the major's thought and took doubt with it. He sprang to his feet and confronted the girl in sudden rage. "You have deceived me!" he shouted. "This fellow was not sick! You are both spies. . ."

"Otto Hoeffel!"

It came from Cragg, an exclamation of recognition. The major stopped short. In the girl's eyes as he glared into them he saw that which changed his wrath into confusion. He turned again to Cragg. He looked into the inscrutable face of the Egyptian. "Tell me," he demanded of the latter, and seizing her arm roughly, "what has happened here! What have you been doing?"

The woman returned his look steadily. "He has come from the dead," she answered low, pointing to Cragg. "God, in that

girl, called him back." She held out a hand toward Marian.

The bewildered, shaken major sank down upon Cragg's cot and dropped his head into his hands. The world, his world as he had conceived it, was slipping, was all but gone, and things utterly foreign to the order of his practical thought were peering forth terrifyingly from behind the lifting veil.

Presently he looked up at the girl. "The *Herr Doctor* said he could not live! . . . He was dead . . . no? Perhaps he did not die; but now at least he is well! . . . But you . . . you . . . *Gott in Himmel!* what did you do? What did you do? I would give the German Empire to know! I would give the world! It was your . . . philosophy?"

"It was the Christ," she answered brokenly.

"It was your religion, your Christianity . . . no? Is *this* the proof that I have asked . . . that I said you could not give?"

He bowed his head again and sat silent. Then he jumped up and confronted Marian. "You are a prisoner!" he cried. "But—you raise the dying—the dead—no? You shall teach me! You shall teach me! God! I will give my life to learn what you know. . . But how did you escape? . . . how did you get back here? *Ach!* what can I do? You are lost! They will be here, the people. . . You were . . . *sold!* . . ."

"This is a place that God possesses!" Marian breathed.

"I can save her!" It was the Egyptian who spoke. And she spoke in English.

The major staggered under another blow. "You speak . . . *English?*" he gasped. *"Lieb' Gott!* you are a spy! Was it *you* who saved her? . . ."

The woman smiled. "You will trust me?" she said simply.

Sounds were now heard in the apartment above. There was conversation, growing rapidly louder. The Egyptian stood listening. Then again to the major: "You will trust me?"

"Gott! Yes! Save her! . . ."

"Stay here to meet them!"

Marian grasped Cragg's arm. The latter got to his feet. The major made as if to seize the girl. The Egyptian saw the movement and, with a quick motion, turned and confronted the major. The latter halted, choked, then smiled faintly, wheeled about, and faced toward the kitchen door.

The Egyptian beckoned to Marian and started away. The girl followed, drawing Cragg with her. In a moment they had crossed the room and entered the corridor, where they quickly disappeared into the darkness. The major shivered, drew himself up stiffly, and stood waiting.

Down the stone stairway, through the narrow hall and into

the room the ruck of revellers poured with noise and confusion.

"Here he is, the tender Romeo!"

"The little American . . . you have found her, Major?"

"Produce her! She was sold to me!"

They crowded around him, babbling, chattering. He held up a hand, enjoining silence. "No, the American girl is not here," he said in a low, trembling voice. "But come, let us search elsewhere for her."

CHAPTER 23

IN the days of the Cæsars the glorious Temple of the God of Abraham—reared, not by Sarah's child, human type of the real, but by the outcast son of Hagar, typical of falsehood and deceit—disputed the crest of holy Moriah with the bulking Tower of Antonia. But what it was compelled by man's preponderance of faith in material force over spiritual to yield above ground, it appeared to regain in large part in subterranean workings. Antonia might justly boast its deep-sunk dungeons, foul and Stygian; but the Temple, too, had its mighty cisterns, its rock-hewn chambers, its great tunnels, its sunken conduits that ran scarlet with the blood of sacrificial bird and beast. From an ancient pool, doubtless the Pool of Amygdalon, near which Titus set up his four engines of war to overthrow the Tower, an aqueduct—now choked with the débris of centuries—once ran southeast to the wall of the Haram-esh-Sherif. Among the hoary legends which still cling to the Temple's subterranean passageways none is more interesting than the one which distinguishes this now crumbling bore as the tunnel built by Herod the Great from the Tower of Antonia to the east gate of the temple area to afford him means of escape in time of peril.

It was toward these subterranean ruins that the Egyptian made her way. A hand clasped Marian's, while the girl clung to Cragg and drew him stumbling after her. With unerring accuracy born of long association, the Egyptian turned from the corridor into a dank stone chamber, thence into crumbling laterals, threading the blackness with feline instinct, and at length plunged precipitously down a winding stairway of broken stone and into a narrow passageway. Of a sudden she halted and hastily lighted a candle. "Down there! Through that!" she commanded, pointing to an opening in the wall at the floor-line where a stone, which still lay before the aperture, had been removed. Preceding them, she threw herself upon the floor and wriggled her body through. Cragg and Marian followed.

They found themselves in inky darkness in a circular conduit. "Herod's tunnel," the Egyptian muttered, as she stooped to draw the stone into the opening where they had entered. "This way!" And, plunging into the blackness, and thence making an abrupt turn, she led them through an aperture, over heaps of fallen masonry, and into a massive room, hollowed out of the living rock. The uneven floor was piled high with débris. The walls reeked with slime. "It is one of the old cisterns of the Temple," she whispered, panting with her exertions. "There is another beyond; and beyond that is one that opens to the sky. You are safe here, for no one knows of this place. . ."

She stood for a moment listening. Then she turned to depart. "I will bring you food. . ."

Marian stretched forth a hand through the semi-darkness and laid it on the woman's arm. "Bring Major Hoeffel," she said.

The Egyptian stifled an exclamation, and stood for a moment hesitant. Then she set down her candle and crept away and out into Herod's black tunnel. A few moments thereafter she wriggled her lithe body through the narrow opening in the wall, noiselessly replaced the stone, and sped away, leaving Marian and the one whom she had summoned from death's vestibule alone in the silence of centuries that enveloped the great cistern.

Alone—yet crowded upon by hosts invisible. Entombed—yet risen. Shrouded in the black ignorance of the centuries—yet illumined, transfigured by the alchemy of an infinite Presence. Now they sat hand in hand, awe-bound, speaking only in hushed tones; now they rose and walked about over the undulating floor of their strange refuge, her arm through his and guiding him, for his sight was loath to return to the empty concepts of this material world. Hour after hour passed, though for them time was no more. Marian, trembling with mingled gratitude, wonder, adoration, labored to untangle the snarled threads of Cragg's memory and rewind them to bridge the hiatus which hatred—Barach's, his own, the world's—had cleft between his past and the present. In her eager effort she seemed detached from all that had occurred; her mental gaze was held away from herself, and she was scarce mindful of the part which she had taken in the vivid drama just enacted. Of but one thing did she appear to be vividly, flamingly conscious: the very God of Israel, whom the world has so vainly sought in the things of dust, had rent the veil of matter and revealed Himself at her side.

But though for Alden Cragg the fragile link of memory was

at length reëstablished, it had become deeply patent to Marian that the man who had returned to her was not the one whom she, in her impulsive zeal, had driven into the realm of death. The component elements of Alden Cragg's soul had been widely scattered by the bursting of Barach's venom, and they had not all come together again to form this new-born creature.

And there were now other elements which she knew had not been there before. In the awful experience which had come upon him when he had been hurled across death's threshold, his soul had been remade; and this great transformation she now saw manifested outwardly in a physical change that made her catch her breath when her glance fell upon him in the wavering candlelight. It was not only that his hair was whitened; but his very features seemed to have been remolded, and into softer lines, less earthy, even less distinct, as if the material had faded, or in part dissolved, and were still dissolving, until it must disappear quite and leave the man visible only to the eyes of spirit. The familiar, repellent air of domination, she saw, was gone. Gone too were the cynicism and the mingled fear and cruelty that had lurked ever in his cold eyes. These eyes, once shifting, narrow, now stood wide, deep, and glowing, as if seeing things in that realm which lies beyond the penetration of the physical senses. He seemed reluctant to speak, but when he did his words came brokenly, and his tones were low and hushed. And the former note of accusation, of critical superiority, of querulous, whining complaint, was no longer discernible in his trembling, awesome speech.

Moreover, there were other elements of soul that she soon realized would manifest in the man no more. His former dense materiality, his love of riches and caste, pride of race, worship of the fleeting things of this world, contempt of his fellow men—all those "stones" which he had hurled at the Christ—were not visible in the remade soul with which he had come back. He knew now that before this experience he had never known the Christ, and in broken syllables he told her so. He knew now that the ritual of Wilson Whittier was but sounding brass, that the boasted science of Roake was the baseless assumptions of the Egyptian Kem. He knew now—and the awful knowledge held him spellbound—that death is *not* death, and that beyond the limited vision, the false concepts, the mere human beliefs and opinions of the man who is not Man there lies a real and attainable universe of spirit that is infinite, with marvels, joys, riches, experiences inexpressible, the briefest glimpse of which instantly blots out the inconsequential things of this human dream so mistakenly called life. He knew that it was to reveal this universe of spirit that the Nazarene had

willingly entered "the mist that went up from the earth," had willingly endured the odium, the reproach, the bitter agony which that experience entailed. But he knew now that "flesh and blood" do not enter this realm, that "mortals" do not attain heaven here or hereafter, but that the heaven of harmony is a spiritual consciousness, reached only as the mortal is put off and the immortal Man revealed as the image, the full expression, of Him who is Spirit. He knew now that in the vestibule of death he had but exchanged one mental experience for another, nor was one more real than the other, for both were material, mortal, false. Neither was life; neither was heaven. And yet the experience had been for him a step in progression. How many more there were to be taken, he might not know, for that was a function of the ridding of his mentality of its material concepts; but he stretched out a hand through the darkness to the girl who had forced him in this small measure out of a cruelly false concept of himself into a better one, wherein he would now begin, in meek consecration and fathomless gratitude, the ascent toward heaven, the consciousness of perfection. To his present situation, to his own and Marian's common danger, he gave not a thought. The sense of material environment appeared to sleep. Fear for bodily safety was gone. He had been on another plane of thought, and yet he had had the same material body. And he had returned with it. His faith in the reality and permanence of matter as substance had been thereby profoundly shaken. Fear and the belief in the reality of a material body he was now ready to accept as synonymous; indeed, looking back, he viewed his material life as fear objectified. It was all a mental experience; all was within himself, and he was, he now knew, a consciousness, a mental activity which functioned either harmoniously or in error according as the thought which composed it might be truth or mere illusion. Come whatsoever mental experience now, he could face it with the priceless knowledge that the human life-experience is *not* life, that death is *not* death, and that only he lives who—as the Nazarene had said—knows God, reflects Him whom to know aright is Life eternal; and only he is dead whose thought is buried in matter and the mesmeric worship of its lustful gods.

Not that these convictions had been born upon the instant, nor without deep travail. They came to him slowly, in the still hours that lingered in the gloom of the ancient cistern. They followed often upon Marian's interpretations of his sharp experience in the vestibule of death. And with them came often self-reproach, self-condemnation, and even despair. His mental chambers became an arena, a smoking field, wherein Armageddon was again enacted, where the beliefs of the mortal mind

seemed mightily to prevail against Truth. His past rose up against him in vast defiance of his efforts to prove it but a mental experience, based upon the "lie" that would separate him from his Creator. And but for the girl who fought so bravely there at his side he might have been again overwhelmed. "Walk with me, Marian," he would plead, for his first upward footsteps flagged. "It is all mental, Alden," she would urge, "all mental. Jesus said that the foes of Israel were those of her own household, her carnal beliefs, her material thoughts, based on falsity. They cannot enslave you longer." She saw more clearly now than ever that as the tree falls so does it lie, that as mortals yield to their self-imposed beliefs and leave one phase of their mental experience, so in essence do they begin another after passing through death. It was clearly revealed to her now why the dominating thought of Alden's mother, her selfishness so falsely known as mother-love, had manifested to him in finding himself the chattel of the worldly Procula. And she knew how to account for the other bonds equally heavy. Poverty had been one of the causes of slavery among the ancient Jews: had not Cragg's poverty of soul manifested in his awaking in heavy chains? What though the chains had been mere illusion? They had been terribly real to him—even as mortal belief, the testimony of the deceiving physical senses, is cruelly real to the human mind that accepts it as truth. Again and again she recalled the deep-visioned Nazarene's parable of Dives and Lazarus, and the Greek text that explains that Dives after death did not find himself in hell, but in Hades, on the touchstone which revealed to his horrified gaze the dross for which he had bartered his soul. And, prisoner though to human sense she seemed to be, and Alden with her, surrounded by dangers acute and imminent, menaced by death, and worse, yet her eyes brimmed with tears of gratitude that there had been revealed to her in the darkness the utter impotence of "the terror by night . . . the arrow that flieth by day."

But had Cragg really died? the matter-minded world would ask.

Yet certainly he had been mesmerized into a deep sleep, which culminated under hatred's touch in the hell of "No Man's Land."

But he had awakened.

Yet did he not wake to better things, but, like Dives, to a state of consciousness far worse, the externalization of his densely material thought grown more material under hatred's befouling touch.

But was it not all a dream?

But so had his former life been naught but a dream, for

human life is but a dream-state of consciousness; and whether the next state shall be better than the one we now experience depends of necessity upon the quality of our thought. Cragg's thinking had been the false thought of centuries; his subsequent state of consciousness was perforce a throw-back, and he entered it stripped and a slave, as could not but occur.

Yet his experience, and the experience of Dives, of Lazarus, of the daughter of Jairus, of Jesus, must prove that there is no death, but that mankind goes on from one state of consciousness to another, with changing beliefs, changing mental concepts, either to a better state, or to one vastly worse in suffering and misery. Mankind will go on dreaming, even as here, until Truth inhibits all false thought-activity, and consciousness becomes consciousness of the real and eternal, no longer of their material counterfeits. Then only will man really live; then only will death be overcome. And the overcoming will not be accomplished by means of drugs and potions, by surgery, hygiene, or bodily manipulation, but by real *knowing,* which is of itself that scientific knowledge of the Allness of God which results in the activity of right thinking, and therefore of consciousness harmonious and eternal.

"Oh," cried Marian, springing to her feet, her frame trembling with her deep emotion, "let no man think he can play fast and loose in this sense of life and escape torment in the next! He will reap what he sows—for he sows his thought—and that determines what his next state of consciousness shall be!

"In my Father's house are many mansions," she went on, sitting again beside Cragg. "There are many states of consciousness, not all the same, but varying according to the preparation that we make in this, our present state. But, oh, Alden, Jesus taught that we need not die in order to live; he taught that the real Man never dies, and that the false human man never really lives!" She saw that, though death may seem to manifest itself to all mankind alike, yet there is really a vast difference, for all do not think the same nor hold a like sense of things. She saw that for such as Madam Galuth—doubtless for many other pure thinkers—the change once known and feared as death was now regarded as but the passing to a different mental experience in the journey toward Life, and that if our work in this earthly preparatory school is well done there will be progression to a better and increasingly less material sense of existence. And yet these intermediate steps—these various passings through death—are not necessary to him who has learned God aright. They were not necessary to Enoch, they were not necessary to Jesus, who rose above the thinking

that results in the death-experience. Jesus passed through it as a man may walk unharmed through a mist, for he knew and could prove its nothingness. Death did not open up to him, to Lazarus, to Alden Cragg, a locality called heaven, but emphasized to them each the immense importance of laboring here and now to work out their salvation, as the only labor really vital and worth while to mankind. What else, indeed, can be of comparable import?

Late in the day the Egyptian crept noiselessiy through the ancient wall and brought the fugitives food and news of the outer world. Cragg, she reported, was believed to have died, and his body to have been buried beyond the walls. Barach had been found by the woman, crouching in a palsy of fear in one of the distant stone chambers. She had returned him to the major, who, still torn with apprehension, wonder, and doubt, had enjoined silence upon them both and remanded the Jew to his prison camp. As for the girl, the city was wrestling with her strange story and the mystery of her escape. Suspicion was directed to the major, and the bad feeling between the German and Turkish officers was greatly intensified thereby. The major was in grave danger; he might save himself if he would divulge the hiding place of the girl; yet the Egyptian was positive that he had made no attempt to discover their whereabouts. He appeared abstracted, and deeply apprehensive; he looked thin and worn; he said little, and continually he paced about his apartments with bowed head. He had not spoken of his disconcerting discovery that the Egyptian was one of the enemy; this appeared not to concern him, now that all his earthly hopes and carefully wrought plans lay in ruin at his feet. And through it all the woman knew that he was affording them his protection. Yet there were some things of which she was ignorant. . .

"Bring him to me," the girl implored.

But the Egyptian drew back in protest. "He is German," she objected. "He cannot be trusted."

"Then I shall go to him," Marian insisted.

"Bring David Barach." It was Cragg who spoke. And in his eyes there was an eager look. The woman stared up at him as at one who had come from the sepulchre. And as she stared, she knew that she would obey.

CHAPTER 24

THAT night came the slight sounds of stone grating upon stone in Herod's tunnel. Marian and Cragg stood at the aperture in the broken wall and waited eagerly. Through the blackness that all but quenched the feeble light of the solitary candle, three figures came creeping toward them. And then David Barach advanced, timidly at first and awe-inspired, then boldly, and fell at the feet of the man whom he had sought to slay, and poured out his bitter remorse and deep repentance.

Cragg bent over the broken penitent and took his hand. "Forgive me, David, my brother," he murmured in the low, soft voice that he had brought from that other realm.

Barach raised his head. "Brother? This from you, a Cragg, to a miserable Jew?" His head sank again, and his tears flowed afresh.

The Egyptian stood holding her candle aloft. Her erstwhile inscrutable face evidenced a soul touched as never before. Beside her, Major Hoeffel, obscured by the heavy shadows, stared and listened, with senses never so acute and never so strangely played upon. Marian bent tenderly over Barach and took his hand. "Brothers you are, David," she said gently. "Alden knows this now."

"I . . . I am a . . . Jew," moaned Barach brokenly. "A murderer. The world is against me. . ."

"You are Judah, David," the girl answered. "But Alden is Ephraim. Lost Ephraim has been found. He and Judah have at last come together in the brotherhood of man."

Barach strained his eyes up at her through the gloom. "Ephraim was . . . an Israelite," he said, almost in a whisper.

"The Anglo-Saxons, David," she returned eagerly, "are discovered to be Israelites. Both they and the Jews are sons of Abraham. Oh, David! . . . Alden! . . ." She reached through the darkness and seized Cragg's hand. Barach rose. The girl placed Cragg's hand in that of the trembling Jew. "David! Alden! What hath God wrought! For spiritual Israel, the Son of God, has been revealed!"

In the echoing solitude of the great cistern Judah and lost Ephraim clasped hands.

"What new wonder is this?" exclaimed the major, pushing forward. "You . . . you . . . *Ach*, Marian, forgive all my cruelty to you! We did not know you in Crestelridge! . . . We would not! I . . . I am still dazed! I do not understand

what you did to restore Alden! . . . But of this I am now convinced: he was *not* dead!"

"No," she answered softly, "he was not dead. If he had been, he would not be here now. No one really dies, for, Otto, there is no death."

"Yes, yes, I . . . I . . ." Speech faltered. Then his pent emotion burst wildly forth. "*Lieb' Gott!*" he cried, "but it is life or death to me! Tell me! tell me! Alden, where were you? What did you see? How did you come back? I *must* know, for . . . I am facing death now!"

He fell upon a heap of refuse and buried his head in his hands. Marian sank by him and put an arm about his shoulders. Cragg sat down on the other side of the major and laid a hand on his. "I will tell you, Otto," he said. . .

It is related of Lazarus that after his return from the tomb his lips were sealed—"those of the grave no closer". So Alden Cragg's, but not until to these wide-eyed, spellbound auditors, gathered about him in the ruined cistern of the glorious Temple that is but a memory, he unfolded the vivid drama that had been played on that other stage of consciousness to which the mortal beliefs of this world had shifted him.

He told it simply, and with a continuity of recollection that omitted no detail. In the semi-darkness his eyes glowed; through the echoing cistern his voice rose and fell, now with the low, moaning lament of a soul banished from its God, now ringing out with the thunderous accents of prophecy, of solemn warning, yet of wondrous promise. He spoke as they had never heard man speak before; and as they sat open-mouthed and tense before him they were transported back to the scenes from which he had but so recently emerged, and there they saw, as they had never dreamed it possible for mortals to see, the Christ. David Barach's emotion struggled with his overwhelming awe; sobs shook him, and he cast himself at the feet of the returned one and moaned aloud; anon, fear seized him, and he drew away, as from a spectre, a spirit disincarnate that had stood, but an hour gone, before God. The major sat as if turned to stone; at times his chest heaved, and great sighs escaped him. Then his head sank, and he sat bowed in humility until the end. The Egyptian remained huddled in the deep shadows, motionless and silent. . .

When the tale was told, and silence again enveloped them, the members of that weirdly assembled group knew that their mortal tongues would speak of it nevermore—the white-haired wanderer who had answered the call of the Christ—the weeping girl who through it all had sat pouring forth her gratitude —the awe-curdled son of Judah—the inscrutable Egyptian—

and the baffled, shaken, humiliated Assyrian conqueror, himself now overthrown by that which he would have destroyed.

The major broke the deep silence that held them. His unsteady voice indicated how profoundly he had been shaken. "This event," he began in a hushed tone, "it is infinite in its possibilities, if . . . *Ach,* if I could believe! It was only a dream of Alden's! . . . And yet . . . and yet . . . he did not die! Marian, *you* kept him alive, *you* held him here! . . . *Ach,* no, the *Herr Doctor* pronounced him dead! *Lieb' Gott!* what you have said to us is all true! . . . all true! And it is my only interest now! The war has ceased to concern me! My own safety, my life, my ambition, it is nothing now! You, Marian, you saved Alden by your understanding of . . . of the Christ! You have answered my question: What is Truth? you have answered it, as you said Jesus answered it here, long since, by demonstration! *Lieb' Gott!* but all human knowledge is folly beside yours! Yours is all that is worth while! *Ach,* if our Kaiser could have had this knowledge, he would have been the salvation of the world, instead of its death! . . .

"Tell me, Marian, must I pass from death to death? What can I do to escape? *Lieb' Gott!* there is no other knowledge so vital!"

Marian was startled by the altered note in the man's voice. There was still work for her to do, and for this struggling soul. And in this dark hour of his conflict with Self she went to him. "From the dream of death you will pass into another dream of life," she answered; "and that will end in death and in a passing into still another dream of living and dying, unless your consciousness has been awakened by the knowledge that Jesus brought to mankind: the knowledge of the Allness of the eternal Mind that is God, and the nothingness of its suppositional opposite, the communal mortal mind and its expression in the material universe and the things of matter."

"Then the human mind *is* matter and it knows only matter. But how?"

"It knows only matter, and this only through the so-called testimony of the physical senses; but this testimony, under analysis, reduces to thought. Matter, then, is only the human concepts—all mental—contained in the human consciousness and formed out of material thought. Is it not plain? Mortals deal with appearances only, and not with real things. Human truth is only relative. Matter is the human mind's way of regarding real Substance, which is Mind. The human mind translates Mind's ideas into its own terms and calls them things or objects of matter. Mortal man is the sum total of his thoughts. The inspired writer realized this when he said: 'As

a man thinketh, so is he.' To change a condition, therefore, whether it be a condition of body or mind or environment, we must change our thought regarding it, for everything is mental. Is it not plain? Jesus said: 'Deny yourself'. Deny any reality to the material concept of man and the universe, and affirm a right knowledge of God, Mind, as all, and discord and death will be destroyed in consciousness. For all is within our mentalities—the evil or the good, the real or the unreal, harmony or discord, according to the thought which we accept as knowledge, as Truth."

"*Ach*, I know now that all our knowledge is a knowledge of lies only!"

"The supposed intelligence of the human mind is only ignorance; it is but a material sense of things. This is what Jesus referred to as the 'one lie'. Jesus denied all the claims of material sense which thinks itself to be something real. He knew that because mortals are steeped in the communal mortal mind, and human intelligence is but the false mental activity of mortal suggestions that really form this mentality, human beings know very little, oh, pitiably little about the real Mind and its idea, Man. And his mission was to teach us that we can get rid of the false sense of man and see the real and eternal Man right where the false one now seems to be.

"Human mentalities, Otto, are not real minds. They are individual reflections of the communal mortal mind, and they reflect its dense ignorance and its terrible beliefs and false claims of discord, disease, and death. The minds of your Kaiser, and your Professors, and your General Staff, of which you were wont to boast, oh, Otto, can't you see now what they are? And can't you see now what caused this war? Human beings are only falsities. They are misconceptions of their real selves and of the real selves of others, formed in their own mortal minds and in the mortal minds of their fellows. Jesus knew this, and he refused to be deceived by it, as the world to-day is so terribly deceived. And knowing it, he could overcome not only death, but the human sense of life, and rise out of the mortal concept of material body. This was his ascension. And so we, every one of us, must ascend out of the material sense that ends in death. Otto, the preachers have led the world astray by teaching that Jesus was God. We are learning now that Jesus of Nazareth became Jesus the Christ by refusing to accept the testimony of the five physical senses as Truth."

"But the world's greatest philosophers deduced the fact that matter is a mental phenomenon," he interpolated.

"Yes," she replied, "but they stopped there, still embedded

in matter. Jesus went further, even to the end, and showed that the cause of the phenomenon called matter is the communal mortal mind, and that this so-called mind is itself material, discordant, and the unreal opposite of the Mind that is God. He called it the father of lies."

"God of my fathers!" Barach murmured; "who would have believed it!"

"Nor will the world to-day believe," said the major, "even though Alden comes back from the dead."

"Many have come back from the dead, Otto," she said, "and yet the world persecutes them. Why? Error cannot cease to persecute Truth until Truth eventually destroys it."

"Then death will cease, no?" The major was again reverting to the topic uppermost in his thought; and again his eagerness and the strange note in his voice made her wonder. "But even now we do not pass into oblivion when we die, is it not so? We do not go to heaven, nor to the orthodox hell. Death is not a reincarnation. . ."

"There is no reincarnation, Otto," she returned. "For the human consciousness, instead of being in the material body, includes the body within itself as one of its many material concepts. And consciousness can form a newer and better concept of body by becoming itself a better thought-activity. Mortal consciousness now endows the body with a sense of life, but there is really no life in the mental concept that we call body. And if we make progress spiritually now, then we will pass into another state of consciousness where we do not believe life to be so inherent in the body, and we will then suffer less and be less limited and constrained. For your life, Otto, is what you are alive to," she went on; "and you are alive to that of which you are conscious. You are conscious of seeing, hearing, feeling, smelling, and tasting material things. You are therefore alive only to the so-called testimony of the five senses and to thoughts about such testimony. But the *entire* realm of God, of Mind, Spirit, reality, exists *wholly outside of this false testimony!* Think, then, of the grandeur of our outlook! And, now that it is proved that we see, hear, feel, smell, and taste only our own thoughts, we can control consciousness, and therefore our sense of life, and we can overcome death!"

Silence again fell upon them. The spluttering candle threw a ghostly illumination that yellowed their faces and heaped great piles of shadow behind them. It was a strange assemblage, gathered in the tensest hour of human experience, in the weirdest of environments, to hear again the unique theme that, centuries gone, the Nazarene had given to a world already dead in matter in the great Temple that once rose above this place of concealment.

Then David Barach crept to Marian's side. "My . . . my wife . . . the rabbi said she died with . . . a smile on her face. What did she see?"

"I cannot tell you, David," the girl answered the feverishly eager man. "Some pass out smiling; some exclaim with wonder, with joy. Probably their newer state of consciousness had already begun and they may have seen familiar concepts—nothing as yet real, nor more real than they saw here. And the concepts that they see are always within them, within their mentalities. They see them as they acquire another state of consciousness; we do not see what they are seeing, for we are in the mental state from which they are passing. And there is no communication between these differing states, any more than the waking can communicate with the sleeping."

"No communication?" he asked. "But the spiritualists believe that they receive messages from the dead."

"There is little difference, David," she said, "between sleep and death. Each is a material manifestation, and both are supposititious. Yet, were you sleeping now, I could not communicate with you, for communication is only between those in the same conscious state. It all lies within yourself, David, as I have been trying to show you. In this life you do not see realities: you see only your mental concepts of them. You believe that these mental concepts of people pass from you in death. But instead of realizing that you could acquire the spiritual knowledge that would restore to you the concept of a person who has passed away, you would strive through mechanical methods to communicate with a departed concept. No one has really departed. And the right knowledge would enable you to prove this. Why not, then, seek to acquire this knowledge, and restore the concepts of those the world believes to have died, and acquire better concepts of them, until the lie of death is destroyed? It can be done. And Jesus bade us do it."

Out of the silence that again came upon them the major's voice presently issued. "The theologians, *ach!* but they missed it all. They have taught resignation to death, but not dominion over it. And the doctors . . ."

"Unless you resort to material remedies—not to God, 'who healeth all thy diseases'—and, when these fail, submit blindly to death, you are considered sacrilegious, or mad," the girl interposed. "Such is the mesmerism of theological teaching since the third century. Blinding mesmerism!"

"But before that date?"

"There is no doubt that the very early Christians raised the dead. There is much to show this. But there is also much to

show that they soon made the mistake of rejoicing in death, instead of overcoming it. Instead of meeting their persecutions at the hands of error, they sought to escape them in death. Thereby they made death a great reality. And thus in part they lost their power over it."

"But if we have not as yet the knowledge that enables us to overcome death?"

"Then," she said, "we must pass through it—but let us do so fearlessly, knowing that it is but a change of consciousness. There is no transition from the flesh to spirit; we but enter another probationary state, as was proved by Lazarus and by others who entered that state and returned. . ."

"As was proved by . . . by . . . Alden?" said the major.

"And in that probationary state we have still to work out our salvation. 'It is not in heaven that we are to find God, but in God that we are to find heaven', as has been said. The spiritual knowledge of God *is* heaven. The way thereto is the Christ, Truth. Jesus said: 'Be ye therefore perfect', meaning that we should be conscious of good only, of the Allness of God. When he said 'Fear not'—and he always said this the very first thing whenever his disciples appealed to him for help—he as much as said: 'Do not believe in the reality of matter or of anything apart from your Father-Mother God'. For he knew that we are a law unto ourselves; that beliefs of all kinds influence us as long as we consider them true. If we believe that we are made of matter, that we are born into it, we manifest that belief in death, for that which has a beginning must also have an end, and that which is not based on Truth, Principle, must manifest discord. Oh, Otto, David, can you not see now how trivial are this life's concerns, and how important it is that we improve every moment here to acquire that Mind which was in Christ Jesus, so that we may overcome death here; or, failing that, enter the next state of consciousness to begin a sense of life that will be happier, holier, better, and that will enable us to overcome death there once and for all time, and then to enter upon that true consciousness of the One Mind and our real individuality as Man? Is the buying and selling of merchandise important to you now? Is social prestige? Is race? Is war? These lead only to the ceaseless round of death in life and a complete missing of the unspeakable grandeur and joy and satisfaction that is ours when we destroy the mesmerism of the communal mortal mind and learn to know God as Jesus did!"

"God of my fathers!" again murmured Barach. His thought was of the Nazarene, of whom it was said that never man spake as he.

Marian turned to him. "You cannot fail to see your wife

again, David," she said tenderly, "for she has not gone away from you. But it must be in the way Jesus taught. God *first*. The right knowledge of Him will give you right concepts of Truth. You will then have the true concept of your wife and of all of God's children, and those concepts are eternal. They are here now, to be had through righteousness, right-thinking, right knowledge of God. But again I say: God *first*. All good follows the observance of the First Commandment."

"But will he not have other concepts of her before he acquires the right one?" asked the major.

"He may have many," she replied; "or he may acquire the right and eternal one very quickly. It all follows on his acquiring the right knowledge of God."

A pause followed, broken presently by the major. "Do you say," he asked in a low, eager tone, "that the beliefs and opinions which we hold when we die are carried with us, or do they cease at the instant of death?"

"They endure until they are destroyed by Truth," she answered.

"Then nothing is accomplished by suicide?"

"Suicide is a backward step. It can only accomplish the greatest harm."

"But . . . if one lay down one's life . . . voluntarily?"

"To so love your fellow man that you will part with your human sense of life if need be to help him . . ."

"Yes! yes!"

She sat silent for a moment, again wondering. Then she turned to him. "What is it, Otto?" she asked quickly.

He rose. "It is the *Götterdämmerung*," he replied unsteadily. "Last night I said we were lost, and I would eat and drink and dance, for *that* was all that was left. To-day . . ."

"You were blinded by despair over your crumbling world, Otto. In human consciousness the world is crumbling; civilization totters; the red hordes of anarchy are forming to swoop down upon the preacher, the professor, the rich man, all who once felt themselves so secure in the things of matter. But to-day, despite the horrors of war and pestilence and false belief, you have gained the priceless understanding of God as veritably with you. And you are no longer . . ."

"I am no longer . . . Assyrian," he said, his head drooping as he spoke.

He stood for a moment; then, looking up: "You have taught me the greatest of all things, Marian, and you have taught by demonstration. So did . . . Jesus. You had the Word. . . I tried to destroy it. But a light has burst upon me: I see in it the great 'Company of Nations', England and America, Anglo-

Israel, keepers of the Word; and, without, in the darkness, I see Germany, the Assyrian, linked with the robber bands of Esau, the tools of error, the unreal opposite of the Mind that is God, plotting and weaving lies, but in vain. And in the light of history, of prophecy fulfilled, and by your tremendous proof in raising Alden, whom error would have made me bury for my own advantage, I see error's final doom. In the dismemberment of the British Empire I thought Germany might triumph . . . but that dismemberment cannot come, though I hold secrets that I believed would bring it about. *Ach!* what a fool I have been! What a fool! For I have broken my wings against God! Mesmerized! Mesmerized! *Ach,* Marian, you died for me, willingly; you died for Alden! Your love is so great . . . so great! . . . I would have befouled you! I would have destroyed you! *Lieb' Gott!* instead, you save me from myself! Yet you save me to give myself to you, to Alden, to the Word . . . Marian, I have something of great importance to tell you, for I may not see you again. . . It is about yourself. . ."

Marian sprang up. The major seized her hands, drew her close, and stood looking down into her upturned face. His throat filled. He released her hands and turned and cast a curious, wondering look at Cragg.

A slight noise was heard: it might have been a stone falling in some distant part of the ruin. The Egyptian came at once to the major's side. "I think there are soldiers above," she said.

The major hesitated. "I do not fear death, after what you have proved, Marian. . ."

Barach had seized Marian's hand. "If the Bible promises with regard to Israel are fulfilled, then what you have said *is* true!"

"They *are* fulfilled, David."

"Come," the Egyptian whispered.

The major straightened up, wheeled sharply, and strode rapidly away, followed by Barach and the Egyptian. A moment later the silence of ages again dropped down upon the ancient cistern.

CHAPTER 25

AGAIN in the seclusion of his apartments, Major Hoeffel locked the doors and plunged into an examination of his files and portmanteaus. Much of the contents of these he hurriedly burned, much he tied into packages and variously labeled. Then he wrote letters, wrote rapidly, feverishly, like

one condemned, who crowds his last moments in anticipation of the death summons. He rose, as day dawned, and called the Egyptian.

She entered noiselessly, drifting in like a mist from the Nile, and sank into a corner of the room, where she squatted, waiting, the incarnation of mystery, of secrecy, of the unknown.

He came and stood before her. And as he stood he felt his sheer impotency. Once he would have spat upon her—once, swollen with pride of race, and bursting with the prestige born of intimacy with the mighty War Lord, who had summoned him to the councils of Potsdam, he would have spoken to her only to command—but now, with his world in ruins about him, his head drooped and his cheek flamed with shame. He had scarce exchanged a word with this woman since the preceding night: the wondrous event which had transpired in the dark keep below had held him dumb. Yet he sought her now for council.

"We can save them, Zuleyka?" he asked, his voice trembling.

She nodded slowly. "Yes, Major—at a price."

He started, though well he knew the price. He stood regarding her for some moments; then he resumed. "Zuleyka," he said gently, "will you tell me who you are?"

She looked up at him with her deep black eyes. "I am a daughter of the Pyramid," she replied.

His eyes widened and he stared at her uncomprehendingly. "Will you tell me who sent you here to spy on me?" he asked, after a pause.

"Why not?" she answered. "It was Simeon Penberry."

He smiled. "I should have guessed," he said. "And has Simeon Penberry my plans regarding the Suez Canal?—the dismemberment plans?—all?"

"Yes, Major."

"Then the *jehad*—it will not be declared?"

"No. The little horn is broken."

He sighed. "You have done your work well, Zuleyka," he said in a tone of utter defeat. "The Kaiser will owe you much for his downfall. *Ach*, what fools you have made of us wise ones!"

He paused, and his head sank. Then he roused suddenly. "But . . . why should I not denounce you now?" he cried. "You are a self-confessed spy! You are in my power! Why should *I* die? . . ."

He checked himself. The woman was laughing up in his face. Did it mean, he wondered, that if he raised his voice against her every German in Jerusalem would fall beneath Turkish swords before night? Did it need only such a spark

to kindle the flame of slaughter? He had heard Turkish officers openly voice their hatred of their Teuton betrayers. He knew that the people and the military were panic stricken before the growing menace of massacre. Would the red scenes of Sennacherib's departure be enacted there again? His blood chilled at the thought.

He pulled himself up. "That is in the past," he said resignedly. "You must live . . . for them. You must get word to Simeon Penberry at once that Marian is here, and . . ."

"I did that long since."

"Lieb' Gott! And under my very eyes!" He stood studying her for some time, then he shook his head and went to his desk. Taking up a packet, he returned to her and held it out. "This, at least, you know nothing about," he said with a pathetic smile, "for I have just written it. *Doch*, when the British come, see that it gets to someone who will place it in Simeon Penberry's hands."

The woman nodded and took the packet. It was closed with many red seals and bore an impress of the German eagles. On it was inscribed in the major's hand: *Concerning the family of the Reverend Wilson Whittier, Crestelridge, N. Y., U. S. A.* She studied it for a moment, then concealed it in the ample folds of her gown.

"I . . . " the major resumed hesitatingly; "I . . . Perhaps the doors are not all closed against me. . . Suppose I take refuge with them in the cistern. Jerusalem will soon fall. . . You could inform the British of our whereabouts, and I would become their prisoner of war. . . What say you, Zuleyka?"

"You would leave Chaplain Muller to be shot?" she asked.

He turned from her and began to pace back and forth through the room, his head bent, and his hands tightly clasped behind his back. "No," he murmured repeatedly, "no, there is no other way. It will save Muller; it will save them. It . . . it *must* be done . . . yes, it must. . ."

He came back to the woman. "You will help me, Zuleyka?. . ."

"Mon Dieu, Major!" The woman rose quickly; her bent form straightened out until she seemed to tower above him; her eyes shot fire; her face glowed. He fell back and stared at her with mouth agape. *"Mon Dieu*, Major!" she cried, "did not the girl tell you where your help lies? Did not that same Power lift the prisoner Cragg from the grave? Did it not protect them both, and restore Barach? Is not that Power using me? Let it use you, though it lead you to the firing squad! I would go with a song on my lips if it bade me. . ."

He had regained control of himself, and he raised a hand

to restrain her. "I go," he said quietly. *"Ach,* these are, as she said, the last days!"

"They are the last days," the woman repeated. "The apostasies are crumbling. Their support, your nation, has failed them."

"And shall there be no more war when the German Empire falls?" he asked.

"War? Yes, for the Antichrist dies hard. Armageddon is still to come; but Anglo-Israel will unite to save the Word, and spiritual Israel will be revealed through them."

"But . . . how can you say this, Zuleyka? How do you know?"

"How do I know? Hear me, Major: I am a daughter of the Pyramid. Its seals are broken in these last days. Its secrets are now revealed."

She seized a chair and sat down, beckoning to him to do likewise. In amazement he complied. Then from the woman's lips fell swiftly such a revelation as exceeds the imaginings of earth-bound, mortal man. And when, as another hour was tolled off by his study clock, she rose, he remained as if stunned. The Egyptian had led him into Mizraim's great "altar" and left him in its narrow Antechamber, awed by what he had seen.

And there through the desolated habitations of his soul great voices rang: Judgment! Judgment! Ah, had he but heeded the call of the Christ: "Come up hither!" he might have found himself, when judgment broke, worthy to escape "these things that shall come"—he might have passed, in symbol, from the upper realms of the Grand Gallery high over the abasing passageways and into the probationary rest above the King's Chamber. Alas! he had yielded to the mesmerism of the "one lie," and by that had been bowed low and thrust into the Antechamber's choking confines, under the great "leaf", where now, stretched to the plummet, he was hearing the prophet's awful words: *"Hear, O earth, behold I will bring evil upon this people, even the fruit of their thoughts!"*

And there in the darkness of that fearsome pile, in the strictures of that dread room, he found beside him his Kaiser, his leaders, counsellors, guides, the false prophets of his haughty race—and not these alone, for there, measured against that same relentless plummet, were all, of whatever race or creed, who had stoned the Christ and sought to kill the Word. And the horrors of darkness were descending into their frozen souls. . .

But—oh, glorious truth!—there was yet a remnant that had not bent the knee to Baal. This remnant would redeem the

day by reason of a spiritual understanding, which, though small to human sense beside the bulking claims of evil, was none the less mighty to save. And he knew now that this remnant had appeared to him and to the unseeing world; but—marvel of God!—*it had appeared as a woman!* Woman—symbol of weakness—always the chattel, the servant, the toy of the virile male! —yet it had been revealed that through her message of the Christ alone could the defeated male world of war and lust, of material ruthlessness, pseudo-science, spear and cannon, explosives, bestial force, be saved—through her alone had come the divine afflatus that shall rout forever the ecclesiastically minded, the proud professors, the money-changers, the worshipers of matter from the Temple of the Most High, the consciousness of man.

But could he, a German, schooled in the lore of Kant and Hegel, nursed on the Higher Criticism that has made Jesus a myth, could *he* accept this senseless *bouleversement?* Wisdom and learning—so he had been taught—were ever the possession of the priests and doctors, of the dominant males!— But *"I will overturn, overturn . . . until he come whose right it is"* . . . and "he", the Christ, comes only through that channel unclogged by the detritus of war and lust and material conquest.

"I can escape! . . . I will!" cried the major, and he sprang to his feet.

But again he saw Alden Cragg rise before him from the couch of death; heard again the words which, in the ancient cistern, had opened his soul as with a scalpel; felt again the transforming alchemy that had proceeded from that girl who had triumphed over death. And he fell back upon his chair. He was laid to the plummet—his life span had been measured to its end and come woefully short—he knew it, and he would pay the deficit and start again . . . somewhere.

But in what coin could such a vast deficit be paid?

In love only—such love as Marian's for the man who had spurned her—such love as the Nazarene's—such a conquest of the mortal sense of Self, such an abandonment of the false human sense of life, that it enabled these to lift their fellows out of the binding belief of sensuality which is itself death. Greater love than this there is none. But Otto Hoeffel had known naught but its opposite: the mawkish sentiment, the sex-mesmerism, the mortal jealousy, the selfishness and deadly fear of parental solicitude—and despite a world surcharged with these, he knew, even as Marian had pointed out, that humanity is dying for very lack of love.

He rose, shaking, but with set lips, and went again to his desk, where he hurriedly wrote an order. Then, summoning

an orderly, he despatched him with it to the prison camp where David Barach was held, after which he again called the Egyptian for a moment's conference. This concluded, he left the Tower and set his course toward Headquarters.

In the crowded streets he moved as in a mental haze. Through the panic of the hour he passed wholly unobservant, his thought resolving, now the tremendous experience from which Alden Cragg had emerged, now the fracas of his own clever schemes and the utter ruin of his life. For a moment he lived again his bemusing triumph over Simeon Penberry while a guest in the great Hall—but the picture quickly vanished, leaving him blushing at his self-deceit. He lived once more, but briefly, in his cleverly deceptive position in Crestelridge—but he flushed hot at the thought of the fool he had been! He reflected again over his scheme for the *jehad;* over his brilliant dismemberment plans, now in Penberry's possession; and then his thought turned upon Marian, whom he had sought to possess, and failing, would have crushed. He had failed, miserably, because he had gone after false gods. Now he knew that "the Lord, He is thy God!"—not the German Kaiser, not himself, not lust of material wealth and power and possession, but *God!* He saw clearly now that which had struck through his Kaiser, through himself, through his race, at the Word, and he saw himself its mesmerized agent, its once pliant tool, but now dulled and cast into the furnace for remelting. How empty now his former boastful pride of race! German? No! For him there was now nor Teuton, British, French, nor Turk, for citizenship was become a function of the knowledge of the fatherhood of God. Ah, why had he not sought this saving knowledge? Alas! it was because he had not loved. He had been mesmerized by Love's illusive counterfeit. He had lived in a fool's paradise, in a world of sensuous impressions which he had blindly accepted for truths. Lost in lusting material selfhood, he had lost God. And God, he now knew, was Love.

But, arrived at Headquarters, fear again rose and Self overwhelmed him with its frightened shrieks. White and nerveless, he hurriedly concocted a request for an order which would send him at once to the south, secretly purposing to walk into the British lines and find safety as a prisoner of war.

"Surely, Major," was the answer given him. "Your idea is good. But, first, what disposition is to be made of Chaplain Muller?"

"Release him," the major replied huskily. "He is innocent."

"Doch!"

And then entered officers returning from the Turkish head-

quarters, where their efforts to quell the rising Moslem rage had failed. The girl and Cragg—had not Major Hoeffel secured possession of them by alleging that they were political prisoners, with valuable information? But that information had not been forthcoming. Nay, worse, there had been a leak, a stoppage, a reversal. And where now were these prisoners? It was imperative to conduct the suspected major at once to Turkish headquarters to explain. . .

In the Hospice of Notre Dame the dark sentiments of despair, hatred, and revenge sat in gloomy council. The German delegation was met with ugly looks and significant whispers and nods. The major was politely questioned, but the questions were razor-edged. The girl, he had alleged, had made her escape, after the prisoner Cragg had been buried . . . but might there not be some doubt as to this burial? Yet some light should be thrown upon this point by the prisoner who had been sent to inter the corpse. And forthwith a demand was made for an order that would hale David Barach before this hastily assembled tribunal.

To the major, torn with the inner conflict, came again the subtle tempter. "*Doch,* Otto," his fellow-officers urged, "if you know anything, tell it, for the love of God!"

For the love of God? But it was for just this love, a new love, suddenly discovered, that he stood now between them and the prisoners in the Temple cistern. Without, the British were drawing hourly, irresistibly, nearer; if he could shelter his charges until the sons of Israel should burst through the city gates—though it cost him his life—would that not be at least an approximation to love?

The buzz and excitement in the council chamber increased. The Germans drew the major aside. "Otto, your silence confirms their suspicions! But tell how the prisoners escaped, the direction they took, or, if you know, where they are, and we are all saved! *Doch,* Otto, that girl means nothing to you! Out with it! Would you sacrifice *us?*"

"I am the resurrection and the life. . . Greater love hath no man. . ." The words rang in the major's throbbing ears. "I, the Christ, am Life. And I am Truth. *Truth!*"

He turned to his fellow-officers. In feverish whispers he sketched a plan and demanded their consecration to it. As feverishly they gave it. And the agreement restored freedom to Chaplain Muller—and repose at length to the tumult in the major's soul. . .

A messenger entered. The prisoner Barach, he reported, had been summoned to the Tower on Major Hoeffel's order, and was nowhere to be found. A cry of anger burst from the

sons of Esau. . . And the major stepped out before them and raised a hand.

Silence fell. The major broke it. In a low, tense, yet steady voice he told them that the prisoners had escaped, and that he, not Chaplain Muller, had aided them. Cragg had not died. He was with the girl. And David Barach had been sent to join them. Whither they had fled, no one should know. And none was culpable but himself. His alone was the crime and the punishment. . .

* * * * * *

"I am the resurrection and the life. . . Though he were dead, yet shall he live." The chaplain, with bowed head and streaming eyes, murmured the immortal words and turned away.

The dawn of a new day drooped tenderly over the domes and minarets of David's city. An echo of gunshots reverberated through the Judean hills and passed into silence. Then a veil of powder smoke rose slowly, rose and formed into a halo that glittered in the sunlight like a crown of gold. For a moment it hovered above the still form of Major Hoeffel, then dissolved from sight. The lips of the dead man were yet warm with the words which the bullets had checked: *"He that loseth his life for my sake shall find it. . ."*

CHAPTER 26

WITH the news of the Caporetto victory flashing over a startled world, and the sanguine avowal that thereby Italy was finally driven from the fray, the report of the fall of Jerusalem would have dropped like a wet blanket upon the reviving spirits of the Entente. It was a contingency to be avoided at whatever cost. Accordingly a decision was hurriedly taken to defend the Holy City to the utmost. The redoubtable hosts of von Falkenhayn would presently send the infidel British trespasser scurrying back to the Canal. And for the distilling of this and similar suggestive propaganda the mental generators of the General Staff were set to working over-time. German officers came hurrying down from the north; breathless reinforcements arrived; machine gun nests were feverishly planted throughout the city; and six hundred German lorries, laden with stores, rumbled into the seat of David to sustain its defense against Israel.

The arrival of the lorries was hailed by the trembling American colony as a manifestation of God's mercy. The terrified

Turks, desperate under the malicious suggestion from their superiors that no quarter would be given by the British, seized upon these lorries, gave over the satisfying of their bloodthirsty rage, abandoned the hangings and the wholesale devastation into which they would have plunged without this means of escape, and hurried madly from the now accursed place. The city rocked with the roar and rumble of heterogeneous traffic. Lorries, carriages, carts—anything with wheels—horses, donkeys, oxen, dogs, were rushed into service to transport from the danger zone material treasures and screaming harems. Red Crescent nurses fled from the bedsides of the dying, yet with sufficient presence of mind to go laden with plunder. Wounded poured from the clearing stations into the tumultuous city; women tottered in, bearing stretchers, and were crowded roughly aside by Turkish dames in a medley of equipages, or astride skinny horses, fleeing wildly with the goods which their profiteering lords had extorted or commandeered, through long months of domination, from the suffering, starving populace.

Of the panic surrounding them, the inmates of the Temple cistern could know nothing except as the incessant rumbling transmitted by the living rock indicated unwonted activity. Nor could David Barach explain why he had been summoned from the prison camp, delivered to the Egyptian, and by her rushed into this tomb with Cragg and Marian. But, though fear chilled him, his every nerve tingled with expectation, for the "last days" were indeed fraught with the miraculous.

And his eyes brimmed often with tears of gratitude, for in the presence of Cragg and Marian he felt himself in an environment of sanctity. These two had come from the "valley of the shadow", where they had seen the Lord. They feared nothing now. To him they had ceased to be human. And yet the fact confused him.

And so he sat apart from them, staring, listening, wondering, hoping. And only when hour after hour passed, and the rumble from without gradually died away, and an awful silence settled over them, unbroken by the return of the Egyptian, did he essay to speak—and then only to voice an apprehension whose growth he had been unable to check.

"Our food is low," he said; "and the water is almost gone. The Egyptian should come."

"This is a place that God possesses, David," the girl answered. "Take what you need. We will not ask more while we still see a supply."

Again, long afterward, Barach rose with heart beating wildly. There were low sounds from without. He crept to the wall and hung, listening. There were soldiers beyond. His

heart was in his throat. Yet it was unlikely that they would detect the loose stone which the Egyptian had carefully replaced in the opening through which the refugees had entered Herod's tunnel. He bent closer. From their conversation he knew they were seeking the escaped prisoners. He heard the name of the Egyptian on their lips. And then, to his horror, he gathered that both she and the major had disappeared. His blood froze. Gratitude fled before driving fear, which swept from his mind the memory of Marian's demonstration of Immanuel. He was buried alive and left to die of starvation!

He rushed back to Cragg and the girl with his burden. But he stood rooted to the ground, and with bulging eyes, when the girl met him. For, "We are glad, David, are we not?" she said. "Glad that we know in whom we can trust."

Then he realized that Alden Cragg had indeed died, for the man in whose presence he now stood with curdling awe would never again be touched by the fear of death.

But Marian took his hand and talked to him, talked to him of the gratitude that she and Alden Cragg had not ceased to voice. And she revealed to him the wonder that from the same sturdy word-root has sprung both "to think" and "to thank" —that because the Nazarene had lived his gratitude he had been able to thank God at Lazarus' tomb for that which he knew was true, though the physical senses were pelting him with their strident lies to the contrary.

The voices of the soldiers without died away and all became quiet again. And then the food was consumed, and, later, the water. And Barach sat and waited, pondering. "He will not forsake us, David," the girl said. "His work is never left undone. But we must *know*."

And Barach strove to know, less materially, more spiritually. But he had only seen with his material eyes; his spiritual vision had not been opened by his own demonstration. Fear grew with the passing hours. By his reckoning he believed that days had come and gone since he had been thrust into this reeking tomb. He grew querulous, fretful, quarrelsome. Hunger gnawed him, thirst began its tortures.

"But God is able of these stones to make bread," the girl said. "He fed the Israelites manna in the desert. Is His arm shortened now?"

But Barach laughed. And fear and suffering made his laughter shrill. "God of my fathers!" he cried, "but a curse came upon me from contact with the Craggs!" And he dropped upon the ground and threw the dry dust upon his head.

Hours dragged through the awful silence. Blackness alternated with twilight as day followed night.

"He fed them with manna, David. He will feed us. . ."

And then Cragg came through the darkness to her side. "Here is bread," he said.

Barach sprang at him with a cry. "You have been hiding it from me!" he snarled as he tore the black loaf from Cragg's hand.

"And here is water," the latter continued gently, holding out the jug which the Egyptian long since had brought to them. "I went to find the outer cistern which the Egyptian said opened to the sky. It is the third one beyond this. I entered it, but drew back lest I be seen from above. Then at my feet I saw this loaf. There is water there, too, for much rain has fallen, and there are many little pools."

Once more Barach, now revived, fell at their feet and begged forgiveness. But again, as hunger eventually returned, did his fears arise. "The bread that you found had been thrown away," he urged.

"But it was fresh, David," the girl protested. "And bread is too precious here to be thrown away."

"Then it must have been dropped by accident," he insisted. "There will be no more, and we shall starve! Or we shall be found and shot!"

But again, after many hours and they had slept, Cragg returned from another visit to the outer cistern, bringing a fresh loaf. And within this one they discovered concealed a handful of dates.

"God of my fathers!" murmured Barach, his eyes streaming. And after that he drew away from Cragg as from a being supernatural.

"The air is fresher out there by the open cistern," said Cragg. "And there is light. Let us go there." And he led them over the débris and to the opening into the deep, uncovered cistern beyond.

That day Barach remained thoughtful, nor did he voice his usual fearful doubt, but when night fell he took up his station close to the entrance into the open cistern. And in the depths of night he was startled from his sleep, for an object had fallen close and rebounded upon him. He reached out and grasped it. It was a loaf. "God of my fathers!" he whispered. "That I can ever doubt again!" And the stars shone out from the blue vault of heaven over the open cistern and seemed to flash to him a message of such love as he had not deemed possible of human knowledge.

And thereafter, night by night, the loaf fell; and now it contained a handful of dates, and now a bit of freshly cooked meat. But whence it came there was naught to show. And

the winter rains continued, and the little pools were kept full. . .

And beyond the city the British outposts crept nearer, ever nearer, flanked by the fleeting Arabs, sons of Ishmael, and sustained in the withering trek through the deserts of Canaan by water pumped up through Palestine from the Nile, two hundred miles away!—*"Palestine shall be delivered from the Turks when the waters of Egypt shall flow into it,"* Marian had quoted to Penberry from the ancient prophecy, now being literally fulfilled. And in fulfillment of prophecy Ottoman dominion over the cradle of Christianity was being hammered into dust. On they came, these irresistible sons of Brith-Ain, to the foot of Neby Samwil, the Mizpah of Bible times, from whose height Samuel judged Israel for twenty years. Up over this famous hill they went, carrying the Turkish trenches by storm; and to it, though it was become a veritable inferno, they clung with the same dogged tenacity that had made Israel the "battle-axe of the Lord" throughout the centuries.

Within the city, despite the nerve-wracking bombardment beyond, despite confusion and panic, the emotions of Christian, Jew, and Moslem were being stirred as only in the centuries long gone. The mighty import of the event at hand was casting a spell of awe over friend and foe alike. This was not the work of man: the invincible EL was in the field—Jah-Hovah was knocking at the city gates—"I AM THAT I AM!" was bearing down upon the desecrators of the sanctuary—prophecy had been fulfilled to the letter, to the day, *to the very hour!* The apostasies of the "little horns" that had struck through Koran and Kultur at the living God were withering before His fiery breath. The refuge of lies was consuming away.

"God of my fathers!" moaned Barach, "if the British should fail!"

"But God can not fail, David," the girl gave answer. "We must *know.*"

"I never knew Him. . ."

"But all *shall* know Him, from the least to the greatest. Oh, David, can you longer doubt?"

As the days had passed, Alden Cragg had gradually become less abstracted. From that invisible realm into which he had been thrust, and to which he clung long after his recall, he slowly returned to wrestle with the material consciousness that physical sense ceased not to urge upon him as the true. He spoke oftener; he manifested a growing interest in environment and companionship; and he turned increasingly, pathetically, to the girl, as his earthly mentor, his spiritual guide. "Walk with me, Marian," he would murmur, as they sat side by side in the darkness. "Do not leave me until I am strong."

And she knew that it was not physical strength that he sought. "But we cannot plan, Alden," she at length gently answered him; "we cannot outline. God lives, and we are in His hands. Jerusalem must fall; but what we shall do then, we cannot now say."

"Walk with me, Marian; walk with me. Nothing else matters now. You are my Miriam," laying a hand on hers; "you have suffered all—you have conquered all—they could not break you. *My* strength has not been tested."

"Fear not, Alden. You have been shown where your strength lies. You cannot lean on me."

Then at times he would wonder what disposition would be made of him when the city fell, for he was still a British soldier.

"Probably you will be given leave," the girl conjectured. "You can go to London."

But he shook his head. "I must go back to Crestelridge," he said. "But you will go, too."

She turned to him in wonder. "But is it wise, just now, to go back there and face those conditions that have passed from your life forever?" she asked.

"It is my duty," he answered. And a deep sigh shook him.

"But your home is really in London, Alden. Your mother will be glad to return there to live. . ."

"I must go back . . . to Ethel," he replied huskily.

"Ethel!" The doors which had once closed against the old sensuous life of Crestelridge now flew open—and she shuddered and grew silent again.

Then fell that portentous December night, when all heaven looked down at the hosts of Israel, crouching breathless, eager, with impatient zeal, for the final leap. The world paused with bated breath to listen. The War Cabinet in London had issued instructions to hold up all messages from correspondents and military attachés until the announcement of Jerusalem's fall had been made by a Minister of the House of Commons—so vital was the fulfilling of this tremendous prophecy even to the lowliest of mankind! Within the city, the people prayed aloud for Israel's victory. The noise of the near bombardment had become deafening; rifle shots sounded but a yard away. German engineers hurried to attach dynamite to lighting plants, to hospitals and mills; the Turkish Governor, bowing to a power mightier than Potsdam, gave orders to have it removed. The retreating army passed through the city in solemn, silent procession, as if under a spell; the wounded streamed dumbly after them. . .

About the British General Headquarters the tall form of

Simeon Penberry stalked in reckless disregard of personal danger or military orders. The first boat that had weighed anchor after he had received word from the Egyptian Zuleyka of Marian's capture had brought him. And as he now paced to and fro he swore fulsomely at the delay of the British. For somewhere beyond those embattlemented walls was a girl who now meant more to him than life. And Simeon Penberry's sole mission was to find her.

Then Israel sprang. And Esau recoiled before the ten-tribed kingdom. Dawn rushed into day. The desperate order went forth to resort to street fighting, to defend the beleagured city to the utmost.

The fugitives in the ruins beneath the Temple site sat gathered at the entrance to the open cistern, holding their breath. "God of my fathers!" cried Barach, suddenly springing up, "I can stand it no longer!" His quivering nerves, rasped raw by the quick succession of events, from the bitter conflict with the Craggs in Crestelridge, the loss of his beloved wife, his attempted assassination of Alden, his capture, the tremendous, incomprehensible event at the hands of Marian, and his incarceration in the cistern to await the throw of Fate, had snapped, and now his brain reeled and his senses became a riot. He plunged through the breach and into the open cistern and scrambled upon a huge pile of débris. Raising his head, he thrust out his arms and yelled wildly. A moment later the alarm had been given; and soon a concourse had gathered about the top of the ruined cistern and were gazing, wide-eyed and gasping, down into its depths at its shrieking inmate.

Again the British leaped from the captured enemy trenches. The onslaught was irresistible. Down crashed the hammer. Up rose the last despairing groan of the Turk. His hour had struck. The order for street fighting was rescinded, and the last of the Turkish cavalcade sprang to horse and galloped out through the Zion gate to a short cut to the Jericho road.

Then Hassain Effendi el Husseni, descendant of Mahomet, and hereditary Mayor, took up the white flag and went out to offer to Israel the capitulation of the Holy City.

CHAPTER 27

URU-SALEM, seat of Melchisedec and city of peace, had passed into Israel's hands. The "treading down" of twenty-five centuries was at last hushed. The "spiritual abomination that maketh desolate," externalized in the "abomination of desolation" that raised Omar's Mosque where once Jah-Hovah's Temple stood, was now to end. The incarnation of insane human pride and power, typified by Nebuchadnezzar and prophesied to reappear in type throughout the centuries until the end of the "times of the Gentiles"—the gross type that found its closing manifestation in the intolerable War Lord of Potsdam—had been overthrown, and by Israel redenta, long lost from human view, but now resurgent, with the spiritual destiny of mankind in its grasp.

When Simeon Penberry came into the city he had been met by a messenger, who had conducted him at once to the Tower of Antonia. There at the portal the Egyptian waited. "I have her!" she greeted him. "Come!" And soon, in the little room above which had served Major Hoeffel as study, the old man opened his arms, and Marian, with a glad cry, rushed into them.

Explanations were brief. But Major Hoeffel's fate remained concealed. Though Zuleyka knew, yet she permitted the girl to conjecture that he had abandoned the city some days before it fell. With his disappearance the Egyptian had gone into hiding in the house of a kinsman near the temple area. From her place of concealment she had emerged nightly to drop a loaf to the prisoners below, knowing, from what the girl had said and done, that it would be found by them. When she had learned that the Mayor was gone forth with the white flag, she left her hiding place. Then she saw the concourse gathered at the mouth of the open cistern. She heard the calls for ropes to lower, and saw the preparations forward to drag forth the prisoners. She turned and fled to the Tower. It was deserted, but for a few pillagers. In a trice she had dashed into the subterranean passageways, crept through the wall into Herod's tunnel, and thence into the cisterns, and dragged Marian away. Cragg had sprung into the open cistern, into which stones were now being thrown and bullets fired, had seized Barach in his arms, and carried him back, struggling wildly. Up into the Tower the Egyptian rushed them, and into a stone chamber, behind bolted doors, where they remained until the city was surrendered and the British were in possession.

And now in the seat of Pontius Pilate sat an English knight.

And now from the streets rose sounds of rejoicing and triumph, of glad relief and deep thanksgiving. Bunting flew from roofs and windows. Women threw flowers and spread palm leaves upon the pavements. The people wept, they embraced, they clapped their hands and shouted loud their delight in a medley of tongues. The era of happiness and freedom, the theme of twenty-five centuries of prayers and lamentations, was in its natal hour.

"England and America have saved the world!" cried Simeon Penberry, tears coursing down his cheeks.

"But must your vision always stop with the material?" Marian asked. "Oh, look beyond! For from that great people has come the spiritual revelation that will roll up the material heavens as a scroll!"

They were seated in the little study, and Penberry had bidden the Egyptian remain with them. David Barach had been removed to a hospital, and Cragg had been ordered to report to his unit. Of the attempted assassination of Alden by the Jew, and of his rescue by the girl, Penberry remained in ignorance. For his mentality—as is the world's—was still in its swaddling clothes.

Yet he knew that Cragg had been wounded, that he had suffered severely. . . "Damme!" he muttered to himself, "that white-haired scoundrel acts as if he had come from another world! I'll get rid of him! He's not fit for further service! I'll recommend that he be invalided home! Egad! he's handsome as an angel. No wonder she's in love with him. . .!

"Besides," he continued to Marian, "Cragg is needed in Crestelridge. Things have been happening there, from what I learn. And, my girl," leaning forward and fixing her with his sharp eyes, "I let you come here to find him, but now that he's found, your interest in him ceases. Deuced romantic, and all that, to come down here for your handsome lover—get captured —imprisoned. But, marry him? No!"

Marian looked at him pityingly. How shallow his understanding! Moreover, by what right did Simeon Penberry assume to dictate to her? That which had passed between her and Alden Cragg was not of this world, nor subject to its interpretation. . .

And yet, when Penberry spoke of recommending that Alden be invalided home, a great protest sprang up within her. For this new man was not the Alden of old. This new one was a closer approximation, oh, much closer! to the man she had always tried to see back of the impossible human thing that he had manifested in Crestelridge. Already the promise of this newer creature was stupendous in possibilities. And she loved the promise . . . greatly loved it.

But, even had the doors of Crestelridge not been closed to her, yet she could not have returned there with him. For her path and Alden's, she now knew, must diverge, else, by very dependence upon her would his spiritual progress be delayed, obstructed. She could not compare her own acquired spiritual understanding with that of the Master, yet now she thought she understood why the risen Jesus had said: "Touch me not, for I am not yet ascended to my Father. . ." He could not brook that the woman should depend upon human support, and so in deepest love he pointed her away from his material selfhood by reminding her that he himself was not yet wholly ascended out of the material concept. From his human selfhood he pointed her to Principle, God. And Marian knew, that if she would see Alden Cragg work out his salvation, she must point him away from herself to the Christ.

She knew that in so doing she was sending him back among wolves. She knew that this new creature would not, could not, return to positions outgrown; that he must alter them, or be himself o'erthrown. She knew that Armageddon awaited him there. Humanly, she would have flown back with him, would have clung to his side, to fight for him, steady him, counsel him, guide. But that would result in *her* progress, not his; that would be selfishness, not love. And she loved Alden Cragg—and because of it she gave him to God.

But whither should *she* go? Penniless, homeless, kinless, alone. . .

"Damme! you're right, my vision does seem always to stop with the material," Penberry gave her belated reply. "But I haven't forgotten the odd stuff you told me in London. Called me an Israelite, eh? I've thought a good lot about that—and I don't believe a bally word of it! Damme! if that stuff were true, do you realize what it would mean?"

"It would mean that the Bible tells the truth," she answered simply.

"It would mean . . . Br-r-r-r! it would mean that I must become a *Christian*, whether I will or no!"

"It means that the verity of God is demonstrated—that the Bible *does* contain the recipe for the healing of mankind—that prophecy *is* confirmed. The discovery that literal Israel is identical with the Anglo-Saxons means that a new day has dawned, that we must now awake to the call for *spiritual* Israel, when every one must wrestle with error and prove himself the Son of God and heir to all His glorious promises, or . . ."

"Means the Millennium, eh? No more war?"

"There will be war again," the Egyptian said.

"Eh?" Penberry turned his sharp eyes upon her. "You croaking daw!"

"There will be another and greater war than this," the woman went on. "Great Britain should know it and prepare. For again the salvation of the world will depend on her and America."

"Damme! How do you know?" Penberry demanded fiercely.

"The stone Bible declares it, the Pyramid."

"The Pyramid! Damme! always the Pyramid! Stone Bible! And yet . . . and yet . . . that was what *she* said." He rose and began to pace the floor. "My thinking is turned topsy-turvey by you two!" he cried. "There isn't a thing as it used to be! . . ."

"No," Marian put in, "for these are the last days."

He came to where she sat and stood over her. "If they are," he said, "I want to know it. I have ceased to scoff since the world has been turned upside-down. I have never believed the Bible—although, as you say, my nation happens to be its preserver and keeper. To me, Cheops' old Pyramid is only a tomb. But . . . if what you say is true . . . and one of your prophecies *has* come true, for you were right about Palestine . . . And your faith that you'd find your lover. . ." He stopped short and looked queerly at her. "Damme! if I had faith like that to find *her!*"

"She is not lost to you," the girl said. "Nothing real is ever lost."

"But . . . she must be . . . dead," he murmured, sinking down in a chair.

"She lives."

He roused up. "How do you know?" he demanded eagerly. "I say, how do you know?" He sank back, and his head drooped. "No," he said, "it can't be. I left her . . . here, in this city. I deserted her here. I went to Africa; she . . ."

"She went to the east."

Again it was the Egyptian who spoke. Penberry sat up and turned on her avidly. "Good God! what do you mean?"

"She went east," the Egyptian continued. "I know. For I went with her. She said the ten tribes had gone that same way."

Penberry sprang to his feet and seized the woman's arm. "Where did you go?" he cried. "Where did you leave her?"

"I left her in Russia. I had to come back here. I never heard from her again. But my kinsmen there may know."

"I'll trace her! I'll trace her! But," his voice fell, "that was fifty years ago. Why should I think I could get track of her now? Fool that I am!"

But Simeon Penberry had been moved, and profoundly. From the day that Marian Whittier came to him in London his life-current had seemed to swerve and his thought to change. "She said my life-work was not yet begun—and I am eighty!" he would mutter. "Damme! what *could* she have meant?"

And now, with the peans of victory rising about him, why was he bidden by this Egyptian prophet to face with his country a future war that would exceed in violence the present one that by the death-agonies of nations was now being drawn to an end? . . .

He must know! Britain had scoffed before 1914 at the idea of another war—and had been bowed in unspeakable agony for her unbelief. Not again should she be so deceived, if *he* could prevent it! He was not a fool: he would meet prophecy with an open mind. And he knew at least that Marian Whittier was sincere. She had given proof that her words were not to be disregarded.

Nor were the Egyptian's—though she came of a race that mingled superstition lightly with truth. But he had abundantly proved her. His agents in Cairo had recommended this woman for important service long before the outbreak of the war. He had employed her, tested her loyalty, and knew when he sent her to Jerusalem to secure employment in the German Intelligence Service that she would render a good account. But he could not have imagined in his moments of wildest fancy that her service would take the tack it had now assumed.

And then, for the sake of his beloved country and for his own peace of mind, he formulated a deep resolve. He would give ear to the lore of Khufu's tomb, and render it proper estimate. Then—equally for Britain and himself—he would sift the girl's mentality of its strange Anglo-Israel views. If they appeared to him truth, he had at last, after long years of searching, found an outlet for his millions and for the life-energy that was still vouchsafed to him. Meantime, he would trace *her*, if perchance a forgiving Providence might grant to him the privilege, after a life of penance, of throwing himself at her feet—perhaps, alas! only upon her grave—and making what feeble restitution he might. The girl had said that she lived. Could the girl know? Yet the girl had prophesied other things, and not vainly. But at least life were a better premise from which to set out than death.

And so he betook himself to the British Command. His mission successful there, he exchanged long cabled messages with the Home Office in London. Then he rushed into the presence of the girl. "Cragg is invalided home!" he announced excitedly. "To leave at once! I go east . . . investigation for

the British Government of Anglo-Israel idea! I have secured a commission for you to assist me because of your knowledge of the subject! Zuleyka will go as your maid! Will you accept? Yes?" He stopped and stood eagerly expectant.

Marian turned from him and looked through the window into the narrow street. It was the road the Nazarene had trod beneath his cross. Then slowly she faced the eager old man. "I will go with you," she said simply. "But we must take David Barach with us." And Simeon Penberry burst into tears for sheer joy over the quick flowering of his schemes.

That day Marian visited David Barach. He was in the hands of the doctors, and she had no moral right to interfere. Yet he became quiet as she sat at his bedside and held his hand. And rationality returned. Again his eyes filled, and he begged forgiveness for his show of weakness, for his consuming fears. "We never fear *real* things, David," she gently assured him, "but only our false concepts and beliefs. We fear only fear. The real is the spiritual; and that is God, Mind and its manifestation. And surely we cannot fear an infinite God who is Love! And there is nothing else, for the testimony of the physical senses is utterly false."

He pressed her hand. "You said Alden and I were brothers," he murmured. "If that is true . . . if that is true, then the Bible promises *have* been fulfilled. But I . . . I can not grasp it!"

"David," she answered him, "what I said to you about God I proved, did I not? Now I go for further proofs. I go for your sake, and for the world's. And you shall go with me. You shall know that the Bible promises *have* been fulfilled. Meantime, David, pray . . . pray . . . pray."

"But how can I pray? What shall I say?"

She bent over him. "Say nothing, David, for true prayer is not lip-service. To know God and to love Him and your fellow men, that is real prayer. Nothing else is required of you. Know God, David, *know!* And rise, David, for your light has come!"

That night the girl and Cragg walked about the sacred precincts of the Holy City. The broad moon rose slowly over the Judean hills, but Gethsemane lay dark in the heavy shadows. He was to leave for Jaffa in the morning, and they would not see each other again.

"Marian—my Miriam—why are you forsaking me?" On yon grinning mound of Golgotha, long since, a not unsimilar cry had risen.

"Jesus said: 'I go unto the Father'," she answered. "When the human 'I' goes to the Father, when self is subordinated to Principle, then our problems will be found solved."

"Walk with me, Marian, walk with me yet a little while!" he pled in the agony of separation.

"But, Alden, I cannot return to Crestelridge."

"Then I will go where you go!"

"You must not, Alden. You must go back to Ethel. Oh, Alden, she will need you!"

"How can I go back to Crestelridge?"

"And yet, Alden, you are grateful that you can, are you not?"

"Marian . . ." His voice came huskily and broken. "I am entering a new life. The old one is gone . . . forever. It is not that I fear . . . no, I fear nothing, not even a second death. Fear died with the man I once seemed to be. But . . . when fear died, love was born. For I never knew what it was to love anyone but myself. . . I cannot recall ever feeling the slightest consideration for another, excepting that, for some reason, you attracted me, however hard I fought against you. Now I love . . . everyone . . . Marian, everyone . . . I would again enter the chamber of death to help Ethel. . . But to marry her now, to live with her, when between her world and mine there is an impassable gulf. . ."

"You may help her, Alden," she answered.

"She does not wish to be helped. She is satisfied as she is. Jesus found many such; and he was forced to leave them. But I . . . I must live with . . . her! Marian, if I could stay with *you!*"

He stopped and turned to her. "Marian," he cried, seizing her hands, "come with me, come! Let us go . . . anywhere, but not back to Crestelridge! Come to me! Walk with me! I . . ."

He dropped her hands and turned away. "What am I saying!" he murmured. "It is not I that speaks, but the tempter. Forgive me, Marian. It is my duty to go back . . . to her." He paused. Then, excitedly: "But she may not be there; or she may have forgotten me. I heard from her once or twice, before I left England; and at times she sent messages in mother's letters. But I wrote her often, until I was sent . . . into the . . . horrors of Trans-Caucasia. I have not written home since then."

"Alden," she spoke low and gently, "the real Ethel is a child of God. That is the only Ethel that you must see. I had to see the real *you,* even when it seemed so deeply buried beneath the false. But that helped to bring the real you nearer, did it not? I loved you, when all others were using you for their own selfish ends, even your poor mesmerized mother. I loved you, Alden, and . . . my love brought you the Christ. So must you love Ethel."

"Thy will, my God!" he murmured, his eyes brimming. Then he took her hand. "Your love was not returned then, Marian," he said; "but now . . . now . . . oh, Miriam, my Miriam!"

Still holding her hand he turned and led her away through the moonlight. The songs of rejoicing over the delivered city were hushed. At the door where Penberry had secured lodging for her they halted. Gently he took her hands and bent over them. "I have come back from the dead," he murmured. "What was refused Dives has been granted me. I cannot now abandon the lost ones of Crestelridge. I must go to them with my message, my warning. Whether they will hear me rests with God."

"Your message, Alden, must be a *demonstration* of Israel. It must be the proof that God is All. Your warning must be the truth that matter is the misinterpretation of Spirit, an unreal concept of mortal thought."

"Yet they will not care to hear."

"Mesmerism will make them turn from you with scoffing, for they are dead, buried in matter. And yet Jesus said: 'The hour cometh, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God'. And, Alden, *they that hear shall live!*"

"Yes, for it was the voice of the Christ that I heard when you spoke. And through you it called me back. Oh, Marian, can I ever voice my gratitude, my boundless love!"

"Love God."

"I do, I do! And the beautiful channel that He chose for His message of life to me, you, Marian, my Miriam, you! I see, now, that you cannot walk with me. But . . . Marian, my thought will go out to you! Oh, Marian, I shall call . . . I shall call to you . . . through the darkness of Crestelridge . . . I shall call!"

"And God will answer you, Alden."

"Through you? Again through you?"

She hesitated. His pathetic eagerness wrung her heart. Her eyes filled, and her voice broke. "Please God He may answer through me, Alden!". . .

For a moment they stood silent. Then he released her hands and turned back into the night. She raised her arms and extended them toward him as if in silent benediction, while the moonbeams fell plashing about her in a silver shower.

Then a cloud drifted across the face of the moon. And when it had passed, the beams dropped into a street deserted, echoing, lone.

THOU ISRAEL

BOOK 3

JESUS saith, I stood in the midst of the world, and in the flesh was I seen of them; and I found all men drunken, and none found I athirst among them, and my soul grieveth over the sons of men, because they are blind in their hearts and see not. . .

—*New Sayings of Jesus.*

THOU ISRAEL

CHAPTER 1

TO the world of April, 1917, aghast at the incredible expressions of evil boiling up in the wake of war, the administrations of theoretical Christianity were yielding small comfort. The pulpit's assurance that all was still well fell as mockery upon aching ears. The divine promise of the Christ: "I will not leave you comfortless," dropped with pathetic impotence from the lips of the Lord's vicars whose faith in the victory of good this side of the grave was withering in the winds of carnage blowing hot from Mesmer's land. "Christianity," wailed the world, "has *failed!*" In the acid test of demonstration, the beliefs and opinions of the preachers had gone down into the dust.

For the world had sought ease in matter as the comfort promised by the Christ. In its many inventions, it had but sought to evade the effort to know God aright. Gassed by the lethal beliefs of life in matter, of intelligence in the gray pulp of brain, it had stopped its ears to the call of Principle, and had rushed eagerly after animal magnetism's delusive gods. By 1914 the Christianity of the Nazarene had been rendered thoroughly innocuous by the schoolmen, through long years of the "higher criticism". The sterile debates of theologians like Wilson Whittier, and their puerile squabbles over the fripperies of orders, ritual, and vestments, had frittered away the life-giving teachings of the Master, and rendered the human mind richly fallow for the noxious growths of every system of perpetuating secret evil in the guise of good. By April, 1917, the deluded world was madly following the serpent's aggressive suggestion to overcome error with other error more subtle, more scientifically and exactly distilled.

And yet, all *was* well—but only within the radius of right thinking. God still healed—though the doctor continued to take the fee. Had Crestelridge heeded the spiritual call: "Awake, thou that sleepest!" its hurt had been cured. But it

gave back the answer: "Give us mesmerism—oblivion—but spare us the effort of thinking!" For true thinking reveals matter and its pleasures as but ephemeral concepts of mortal thought. And Crestelridge elected to sleep on unto death.

The sudden wresting of Alden Cragg from the shelter of his mother's arms that bleak April night had produced a shock from which Mrs. Cragg was slow to recuperate. And full recovery was long delayed because of the poison distilled within her soul by acrid thought of the avoidance of military service by Alden's cronies, Ted Sayor, Wallie Black, and the grinning Freddy Kerl. It was further impeded by the ceaseless worry which began its ravages with Alden's departure. From thenceforth, under its torments, she followed him with direst forebodings. A thousand times she saw his troopship sink under torpedo attack; a thousand times she saw him ill, suffering, neglected, insufficiently fed, clothed, or bedded. A thousand barbed fears assailed her that her boy's finer clay might escape due recognition. Daily she saw him in battle, saw him wounded, or—hideous vision!—dead in a forgotten grave. And these dreadful mental conjurings all but drove her mad.

But as those first days of agony passed, and word at last came from Alden in England—voiced in peevish letters that brimmed with complaint—the acid in her soul crystallized into a malignant hatred of the Government that had stolen her son. And this hatred she sought occasion to voice, loudly, indiscriminately, and with a foolish lack of wisdom.

Yet to her diatribes against the tyranny of Britain there was found none in Crestelridge to offer check. Senator Chaddock should have done so, for he heard them oftenest, having wellnigh taken up his abode in "Craggmont" because of his absorption in the affairs of the great Cragg estate. And Doctor Roake might have admonished the reckless woman, for he spent hours with her, listening attentively to her plaints. But, instead, these often nodded their approbation, often murmured—when there was none else to hear—their full agreement. And more, they would at intervals—particularly when she appeared most violent—mildly recall to her thought other acts of polity wherein Britain had been reprehensible; and this generally threw the suffering woman into paroxysms of rage that left her exhausted and ill. Then the doctor would soothe her with his calm, steady gaze and soft words, and leave her with her mentality dulled and inert.

Daily she wrote to her idolized son. And daily she committed the grave indiscretion of voicing to him in these voluminous letters her bitter thoughts. Yet even this was not done unadvisedly, for Doctor Roake had said, finding her one day

poring over one of her most fulsome invectives: "It will do you good, my dear Mrs. Cragg, to unburden yourself in this manner to Alden." And from that hour he was wont frequently to suggest little items to incorporate in her letters to her son —apparently harmless bits of gossip concerning Britain and America, or anent the Cragg interests, financial and other, throughout the world and, in particular, in the German Empire. . .

"As to subscribing to Liberty loans," he once replied to her cynical remarks on this topic, "are you not already greatly burdened by British taxation?"

"I am avoiding much of it, thanks to my barristers and to Senator Chaddock," she answered grimly. "But why should I purchase Liberty bonds to prolong the war? Have I not given my son? The more money they have, the longer they will fight!"

"Your offering, Madam, has been enormous," he said, bowing low. "An additional monetary sacrifice should not be required of you. And it is not."

The violent eruption of patriotic sentiment which burst forth, almost over night, upon America's entrance into the war, should have produced upon Mrs. Cragg a beneficent effect similar to that which Ted Sayor believed he observed in those few of Crestelridge's feminine gentility who gave themselves, at least in part, to war work. "They are healthier now because they have something to do. Give 'em nothing to do again, and they will begin once more to explore their anatomies for trouble, and before they are through they will find in them every disease known to Jahr. Let the war go on, I say, till they have to hand their Pomeranian pups to their maids for last week's wages, and dismiss their specialists, and roll up their sleeves. When the *women* get down to work, there'll be an end to medical aggression." But the call to patriotism left Mrs. Cragg cold. Nor as time went on and the country lost itself completely in its new ardor, did those of her immediate set respond other than perfunctorily. The Telluses, Blacks, and Kerls gathered in cold-blooded consultation regarding the merits of Liberty bonds as an investment, and shook their heads. There were wider avenues open: Primal Motors, for example. And what with the secret purchase and hoarding of foodstuffs and apparel, and the subsequent profits to be garnered from wise speculation therein, and the prospective profiteering on their brothers' needs, the purchase of Liberty bonds in other than sufficient amounts to ward off harmful criticism was ill-advised.

"Liberty bonds!" exclaimed Ethel Whittier, with a curl of her lip; "all this fuss over them makes me sick! Can't go to

a theater without having to listen to the dribble of Four-minute Men! Can't step foot from the house without being assailed by mushy solicitors! Why, they even chase right into the rectory after us! It's an outrage! I wouldn't give 'em a penny! Harris says Liberty bonds are an awfully poor investment. . ." And Ethel's vaporings to Mrs. Cragg on the subject were duly incorporated by the latter in letters to Alden that were read by darkly scowling censors, who made fulsome annotations therefrom.

From Alden's appointment as orderly to Captain Fitley was born the lively hope that he might be stationed in England until the close of the war, and Mrs. Cragg clutched it with feverish eagerness. Feeding hourly upon it, she began to recover strength, and to give promise of resuming her wonted social activities. But, alas! scarce had she risen from her bed when she was summoned to combat the baleful rumors which had meantime spread concerning her son's enforced enlistment. The story of that fateful farewell party at "Craggmont" had gone subtly forth, gathering accretions as it traveled, until it had become the possession of every household in Crestelridge.

Vain now were Mrs. Cragg's wild efforts to quash it. Vain too those of the Whittiers, of Senator Chaddock, and Doctor Roaké. Even Harris Chaddock had covertly and cruelly reminded Ethel of the disgrace, until that proud young worldling hid herself at last for very shame. The untrammeled gayety which she had planned to enjoy as Alden's betrothed had shriveled with the frost within a fortnight of his departure.

"I shall break off my engagement to Alden!" she wailed, as she threw herself upon the davenport in the library of the rectory. "He's a coward and a ninny! He was putty in Marian's hands! Oh, everybody is laughing at me! I shall write him and break off the engagement to-day!"

"You will do nothing of the kind!" cried Mrs. Whittier in alarm. "The boy was simply overwrought, and Marian took advantage of his mental condition!"

"Oh, I always knew he had no backbone!" Ethel sobbed. "He hasn't the fighting-spirit of a snail! He's a coward, a measly coward! I won't be the wife of such a milk-sop! I won't! I won't!"

"You will! Ethel, you must! He will have millions!"

Ethel sprang up and stamped her foot. "I won't have him! I *won't!* I shall have millions myself when Old Penberry dies!"

"Oh, Ethel . . . we are not sure!" Mrs. Whittier burst into tears.

"Not . . . sure?" Ethel gasped. "Ain't I his grandchild, named in his will? Say . . . !"

"Yes, yes!" cried her mother; "but . . . Oh, Ethel, suppose there should be another heir!"

"Another heir! Look here, do you know of another?"

"No! no! no! But . . . we are investigating . . . And we must take no chances! No one plays cards to lose! You must hold Alden . . . until we know!"

And so Ethel Whittier, unhappily impressed by her mother's fears, remained ostensibly faithful to Alden, while her contempt for him grew daily stronger. She wrote no more to him, although, under maternal compulsion, she continued her now perfunctory visits to the lonely inmate of "Craggmont", who had come to look to her for the few gleams of light that now streaked her desolate life.

But if Ethel had turned against Alden, so also did she shut the door against Harris Chaddock, who had so deeply offended her. And the more insistent his entreaties to be reinstated in her favor, the more obdurate she became. "I'm going to punish him!" she contended, when her father mildly remonstrated. Yet in her heart she knew that, if Harris would but break down the barriers which she had erected, he would find her unresistant. And Harris, chagrined at the unexpected turn of events—for he had reckoned that the belittling of Alden in the girl's eyes would redound to his own strength, and he saw now that he had gone too far—swore softly and renewed his determination to wrest the Penberry heiress, at any cost, from the absent Cragg. And to that end he ceased not to cultivate the rector nor stinted his preparations to unite with St. Jude's at the next Confirmation.

But the cultivation of the rector had become a more difficult task. For some days after that direful party in "Craggmont" the reverend gentleman had kept within doors, passing most of his time in the seclusion of his study. Fear to face public opinion held him long a prisoner. Marian's conduct had plunged him into deep disgrace; yet when he reviewed his own part in the events which had culminated in the distressing climax of that black night, his face flushed hot with shame.

But there were elements in it that now, in his moments of reflection, confused him and gave rise to grave apprehensions. He must acknowledge a part in the miserable affair, and a most ignominious one, played by himself. True, it had been played because of his maddening desire for relief from the girl's irritating presence; and he must admit that the menacing problem which she presented in herself had been solved by her departure from Crestelridge. But the manner of her departure had left an additional sting, and, worse, a great fear, for—and here was the danger!—it had aroused the keen displeasure of the

one man whose favor the rector was most desirous of retaining, Dr. Jeremiah Roake.

The doctor had been slow to credit the report of the girl's departure, had been loath to believe that Marian had left without announcing her intention to the household. And it was not until the rector received a brief note from her, written in New York City, that the doctor realized that she did not intend to return. Together with the frightened rector, he hurried into the city to the address which she had given; but she was not there. Then, a few days later, the rector received another note from her, stating that she was embarking for England that day —but this the rector's now thoroughly alarmed wife forbade him to show to Doctor Roake. A consuming fear had entered Mrs. Whittier's soul, and she transmitted it at once to the susceptible rector. It was not fear for the girl's safety, nor for aught that might proceed from her voluntary conduct. It was a stunning, paralyzing fear that, in that unaccountable manner of what the rector might call the girl's "involuntary conduct", she might now meet—of all persons!—Simeon Penberry. It was this hideous fear that held them staring at each other in speechless apprehension, that dissolved Mrs. Whittier in bitter tears, and that drove the smiles from their faces for many a day.

But the manifestation of Doctor Roake's displeasure was momentary; and soon the rector breathed easier, even if not yet normally. And as days passed, then weeks, and no further word was had from Marian, other than a brief announcement of her arrival in England, the rector gradually resumed his wonted activities—and yet with a lessened enthusiasm, a diminished interest, and a growing disposition to postpone the consummation of his tasks until he might ask a searching Why? Daily he found himself dwelling with Marian in thought; nightly, poring over tomes of reference and commentary, he might have been seen, alone in his study, struggling with the radical views, the stern admonitions, the warnings which she had left him. "The solution of a mathematical problem comes instantly when one knows the truth regarding it." The words were Marian's, and now they revolved incessantly in his thought. And Marian had said that the truth which would solve life's complex problems was the allness of God and the nothingness of matter. "But," cried the troubled rector over and over, "matter is terribly real!" Had not Ethel demonstrated that by pounding upon the table at dinner that fateful Sunday? "Matter is created by God! If I should shape my life by the chimerical belief in its unreality I must renounce all science, all knowledge, and must deny my God! I can't accept it! If I should

. . . If I should . . ." He shuddered. The prospect terrified him.

And yet was he not, in a manner, meeting Marian's demands, for was he not taking steps to revive the Church's long neglected function of healing by coöperating with Doctor Roake in the latter's remarkable plan? Marian had spoken truth, in part. The suffering world was losing faith in religious systems that divorced the healing of the sick from the practice of Christianity. But to meet the world's great need Doctor Roake had now come forward with a most common-sense scheme, one infinitely saner, less chimerical, than Marian's.

And in dreaming over it the rector would plan the great missionary revival to follow the consummation of peace, when hosts of inspired young men should push irresistibly through stricken Europe with the call of the Gospel. And he would sigh for a leader, some inspiriting religious genius, who, with preaching, with books, tracts, and Pentecostal fervor, could arrest the human mind and transmute it with the forceful alchemy of Christianity. But always through these dreams he saw Marian, and heard her ringing challenge: "If your missionaries will heal the sick and raise the dead by *spiritual* means, your vision will be realized, but not until they do." And he would remember how she had insisted that disease was mental in origin. "Why," she had even exclaimed, "I believe much of the world's sickness is directly due to its variant religious beliefs! And some day you will acknowledge this." But now he shivered at the sacrilege.

Yes, Doctor Roake's plan, the rector believed, met every requirement for emerging readily and without jar from the material into the spiritual. . . Yes, as he continued to study it, and came more and more under its subtle spell, he considered it nothing less than inspired. It certainly was the long-sought solution.

And it was a tacit recognition of the supremacy of the Church—in particular *his* Church. And his was the conventional and officially recognized religion of Britain, elaborated to conform to Christ's own words. He belonged to the historic "High Church party". He stood—as he delighted to quote from encyclopedic authority—"above the prevailing low level of churchmanship and put forward higher and more philocatholic views in matters of church authority, belief, and worship". "We are English Catholic, with distinctive principles," was his boast. St. Jude's was the oldest parish in the diocese, and rock-ribbed. It had become the most active social center in New England. If it invested the established order with a sanctity not its own, Doctor Roake's plan was certain to correct

that defect. If, as Marian had complained, its rector was pandering to the worldly tastes of a wealthy and ultra-conservative flock, it must be remembered that there were in his congregation some of moderate means, whom the rector regarded highly, and whom he visited at stated intervals in their modest homes, and to whom he delegated much of the monotonous and routine church work for whose maintenance the Telluses and Blacks and Kerls contributed so generously. And if, as Marian had further accused, out of St. Jude's had departed "all sense of reality or personal claim", that remark was to be regarded as the heckling of an iconoclast. By its works now, under the inspired Roake plan, would it provoke criticism of a nobler sort.

Thus did the greatest opportunity of the rector's career, afforded by the girl Marian, pass unheeded over his head. Thus did the bemused rector shout *"Kamerad!"* to his besetting problems, abandon the struggle, and settle down a captive to an illusive compromise. In like manner had the grandest opportunity in the history of religion, afforded by the great war, passed unnoticed over the churches of Christendom. Mesmer remained triumphant over St. Jude's as over the Church of God. "The maximum of respectability with the minimum of thought" still governed in her councils. Following the leadership of its vestry-governed rector, St. Jude's shifted its burden to God; attributed to Him the causation of sin, sickness, sorrow, temptation, death; then proceeded to plunge still deeper into worldly excesses, with the comforting assurance that belief in the doctrine that Jesus died for the world was passport sufficient to celestial bliss.

As part of the readjustment to normal of himself and his distraught household after the wretched experiences of the past few weeks, the rector yielded to the insistence of his wife and daughter, and early in June sent them to a fashionable Atlantic resort for the summer, planning himself to join them for an occasional week-end. Mrs. Cragg would have fled her troubles with them, but for the opposing council of Doctor Roake. "Craggmont", he assured her, afforded the exact asylum which she needed for seclusion and rest, and there, under his watchful eye, she would most rapidly build up her energies so dissipated by these past weeks of nerve-wracking experience. "I want you where I can see you every day," he said gently, as he softly stroked her hand. "You are now my most particular charge. But," and he laughed, his deep, rich voice resounding musically, "I am making Senator Chaddock really jealous. I can't persuade him that *my* interest in you is quite professional."

CHAPTER 2

WITH the writing of the Wess bill upon the statute books, the activities of Dr. Jeremiah Roake became noticeably greater. Upon these the community looked with approval, when they looked at all. The social spirit of service animating the great physician was surely their strong defense. And while the bleeding sons of the masses beat back the hordes of autocracy in Flanders to render the autocracy of Crestelridge secure, while the intellectual atmosphere of a sorely chastened world seethed with the advanced ideas of reforms to be when —please God!—the Hun should be turned, Doctor Roake patiently, urbanely—who would not say beneficently?—crystallized the audacious plans which had been simmering long in the crucible of his mind.

With his stirring campaign of education in matters of public sanitation, there could be no disagreement. The community needed cleaning up—mentally, to be sure, which would of necessity become externalized in outward form; but if the cart must needs precede the horse, well and good, so be it that the cart go forward. In the call to the physicians of the surrounding community to assemble to hear and discuss the eminent doctor's plans of organization, there could be found no fault. The announcement of his unique scheme of coöperation with the churches was received with thunderous applause—and the Reverend Wilson Whittier, who sat on the platform, swelled with the pride born of his association with this remarkable plan. World-health first, then world-spiritualization: a sound mind in a sound body, and the latter to be discarded for spirit—when the pains of matter dropped the curtain of death on its joys. The scheme was approved and sealed without demurrer by mortal mind.

It was not in the public announcements of Jeremiah Roake that Doctor Benson first scented a possible danger, but rather in the apparently casual remarks which the former dropped here and there, the insinuations, the innuendoes, the softly-voiced suggestions. But it was not until Dr. Harris Chaddock had been appointed Health Executive, as the first fruits of the Wess law, that Doctor Benson openly voiced his opposition to certain of the activities of Doctor Roake.

"Why, Harris Chaddock is a mere boy!" he muttered, as he paced the floor of his shabby office. "And he's a roué! He entered the medical profession deliberately—on his own confession—because women make such fetishes of doctors!

Because they adore, worship, and fear them! He's a lustful gutter-whelp! But he's a clever politician, like his father—and for that I distrust Roake!"

Then his thought went back to Marian Whittier. And he shook his head. "I'm an old fogy, I admit," he growled. "My one ambition has been to help my fellow man. And I've given myself, under tremendous burdens, day and night, rain or shine, sick or well. My only concern has been my obligations to the sick and my opportunities for service. And to that end I've kept myself a *doctor*—I've not degenerated into a politician!"

By dint of careful inquiry Doctor Benson discovered that his views were shared by others, and when Doctor Roake's proposal for a "Public Weal Committee" came before the physicians already organized under the plan, Benson made bold to call Doctors Lann and Sale to discuss it. "It is a state-wide measure," he pointed out. "Is it preliminary to a national measure?"

"Impossible to say," was Doctor Lann's opinion. "Roake's injection of the religious issue into the medical question has colored the whole thing. Whether this is a disguise—I trust I may speak freely here?" looking carefully about.

"Don't hesitate, Lann," Doctor Sale assured him. "My own suspicions have been aroused too. Like yourself and Benson, I am solely a doctor, not a politician. This 'Public Weal Committee' of Roake's certainly will infringe on the people's liberty. Of course, the question now raised is: Is such infringement justified? For my part, I say no."

"The dangers are enormous," Benson declared decisively. "The end is paternalism—the American people shackled. As I see it, it means an autocracy controlling every human activity. The drift toward bureaucratic government in this country is already so strong that, unless it is checked, we shall soon be where Germany was before the war: a nation whose thinking is doled out to it by the Government."

"For that alone," said Sale, "our Government would require at least an additional three hundred millions in money. Now, will the people stand for it? Or will it result in revolt?"

"But Roake has the churches back of him," Doctor Lann pointed out. "By the way, he is spending an *enormous* amount of money! Where does he get it?"

Benson shook his head dubiously. "I don't know," he said. "But this I can say: it was the Cragg money that put the Wess bill through. And it was Whittier who influenced the Craggs to give it."

"But he will need millions more. Will the Craggs supply it? And, say, where is young Cragg now?"

"Nothing has been heard from him in weeks. They say his mother is distracted. But we are digressing. What is to be our attitude toward the Roake measures?"

The others sat silent for some time. Then Doctor Lann spoke. "What will be the attitude of the national, state, county, and local medical associations? Will they submit to him?"

"Of course he has considered all that," said Benson. "They will yield to his domination, you may be sure."

"In that case, what can we do?" Lann asked hopelessly. "To oppose a genius like Roake, who has unlimited funds back of him, and who is blindly supported by the churches and by the great unthinking majority of the people, would be folly. We'd risk our professional standing, and even our means of support, I think."

"But only St. Jude's is supporting him thus far."

Lann smiled. "True. But it is tolerably certain that the other churches will fall into line. I would stake my small savings on it."

"It's a crime!" exclaimed Benson, rising and starting to pace back and forth. "His proposed medical trust is the greatest menace hanging over the American people to-day! It's a fraud, a delusion, a thieving scheme, with the people holding the bag, as they always do! World-health? Why, my friends, do I need to remind you that in the great struggle with disease we doctors are losing ground every day? We have had terrible battles, with some notable victories: smallpox, yellow-fever, and typhoid have all but surrendered to us—at least, they've declared an armistice—but only after destroying billions of human lives. And we must acknowledge that even they have been conquered, not by medication, but by prevention that has resulted from cleaner thinking. But what then? New diseases and plagues crop out where these have succumbed. And the old line of torturing, death-dealing ailments remain unchecked, or are actually gaining on us. I am not an advocate of any particular school of medicine. I care not how suffering is alleviated, so be it that the patient is relieved. If Marian Whittier can cure without medicine or manipulation, I rejoice. But, my friends, Roake's plan, if successful, will ruthlessly crush out every form of treatment but his own! It will absolutely dominate the hundred million people of this country! His Wess bill was slipped over on us while we were asleep! It has already opened the doors of every home in the State to him and his agents, the health officials, the executives, the community nurses, and the various 'cappers' that he will now appoint. Where, in God's name, will it end?"

Again they sat in moody silence, broken at length by Doctor

Lann. "But to fight Roake with the feeble weapons we now possess appears to me sheer suicide," he protested. "He can destroy us, and he knows it, else he would not have launched his scheme. Unless we can undermine him in some way, we would best follow at his chariot, I say!"

"God forbid!" cried Benson. "What say you, Sale?"

Doctor Sale shook his head dubiously. "I counsel caution, extreme caution," he answered. "Oh, I agree with your views of the menace in his plan, but . . . I have a wife and three babies to support, you know. To fight him with his own weapons is out of the question; and other weapons have we none." . . .

Meantime, in the momentary exaltation of propinquity to the great physician, the Reverend Wilson Whittier felt a renewal of courage, and he forthwith grasped his ecclesiastical scythe and strode out to the fields white for harvest. With Harris Chaddock soon safely garnered as a communicant of St. Jude's, the rector again went after the cynical soul of Ted Sayor. The vacuum of Ted's objectless existence should be filled—Doctor Roake had suggested to the rector that the young man's caustic remarks anent medication and religion were born of spiritual desuetude. The youth was a victim of reversal. His spirit and his goods rightfully should be devoted to the very causes which now suffered his ridicule.

"Come, Ted," said the rector, cornering the young man in the lounging room of the International Club and putting an arm affectionately about his shoulders, "it is time you became a Christian, is it not?"

"What's a Christian?" Ted demanded bluntly. "The war, you know, has upset our views."

"Why," the rector hastened to elucidate, "a Christian is a follower of the Christ."

"Are *you* one?"

"Er . . . Why, Ted! Certainly I am! What a question!"

"It *is* a silly one, isn't it?" Ted returned quixotically.

"Ted, the Church needs you," the rector urged.

"Oh, no," said Ted, rising. "It needs Christianity. But, I'll tell you what: I'm a clubman and something of a joiner. And if you will come out honestly for just what you are, and will state plainly that St. Jude's is a social organization, a club, and nothing more, I'll join it. But I'm not a hypocrite, and I refuse to pretend to be a member of a Christian church that knows nothing about Christianity. Do you agree?"

"Ted!" cried the rector, aghast. "Certainly not!"

"Then please excuse me," said Ted. "And," starting away, "I must leave you now, for I have a dinner engagement and

theater afterward." And he took his departure, leaving the rector staring after him with mouth agape.

The chagrined rector voiced his plaint to Doctor Roake—and the latter laughed, softly, as was his wont, and, in his wonderfully soothing voice, counseled patience and an ampler consideration for the foibles of youth. "Suppose I send our new Health Executive to quarantine Ted so that he can't elude us; then you can work on him, and we will not raise the quarantine until he consents to join St. Jude's."

The rector glanced at the doctor with a start. "But," he questioned seriously, "has Harris Chaddock such ample power?"

"Certainly," replied the doctor easily, "if he suspected contagion. Would you like to see a demonstration?"

"Could . . . could he enter . . . *my* house . . . against my wishes?" the rector asked reflectively.

"To be sure, under the Wess law. So see that you all remain healthy. Consult your physician regularly and you will have no trouble. What do you hear from Mrs. Whittier and Ethel? Do they keep well? Ethel needed the change and rest. She is delicate—inclined to anæmia. And she is very temperamental, resulting in 'nerves'. She must take a regular course of treatment this fall."

Then, changing the subject quite abruptly: "Oh, by the way, do you, by any chance, hear from Simeon Penberry these days?"

The rector changed color. "We have heard nothing from him since the . . . the war began," he replied unsteadily. And then, to his horror, he heard again the clattering of that bony thing that, long hidden, now burst again from its cell and rattled out to seize him by the throat. . .

"You believe in God?"

"Heavens, yes! . . . I am trying to!"

"And that which is hid . . .?"

"Spare me! spare me!"

"Then loose me and let me *GO!*"

The rector sank perspiring into a chair. Doctor Roake hurried to him and felt his pulse.

"It is . . . nothing," murmured the rector, struggling to his feet.

"But it *is* something!" the doctor insisted. "Come in here," taking his arm and persuading him toward an adjacent door, "and let me examine you."

And thus, while the rector made no revelation of his mental content, the doctor's keen penetration disclosed a thread which, when followed, he was certain would lead to the irascible old master of Penberry Hall. And he determined to pursue it.

"Your condition is not serious," was his verdict, the examination concluded. "Yet it is important, in that it may soon lead to invalidism. We must discover what bacterial proteins you are sensitive to, and then vaccinate against them." With which professional pronouncement he dismissed the rector and sat down to compose a cable message to his agents in London, who would transmit it to Major Otto Hoeffel, of the German Imperial Staff, engaged at that moment in keeping Penberry Hall under careful surveillance, that he might note the departure of its strangely detained guest, one Marian Whittier. . .

With such simple moves on the chessboard of Fate was Crestelridge concerned that summer of 1917—preliminary moves all, maneuvers for position. And then came fall, and the harvest.

For more than two months Mrs. Cragg had heard nothing from Alden, and fear had succeeded worry, and terror replaced fear. And then to the menace of the loss of her beloved son was added that of federal displeasure, nay, chastisement, for it now developed that Washington would fain regard Mrs. Cragg as an enemy alien.

Perhaps her danger was exaggerated by her sedulous counsellor, Senator Chaddock. Perhaps, but for a mentality weakened by excessive worry, disappointment, chagrin, and consequent ill health, she would have met the alleged menace with her old-time defiance and vigor. Perhaps . . .

But even Doctor Roake now shook his head gravely, and reflected long and deeply before replying to her anguished questions and pleas. The Craggs *had* been intimate with Otto Hoeffel; and Otto's status was now fully revealed. True, Doctor Roake had introduced him into "Craggmont"—How terribly he had been deceived in the young man! But many of those apparently harmless enthusiasts who had been wont to assemble in "Craggmont" before April, '17, were now known to be serving the enemy and laughing in mockery of the gullible hostess of "Craggmont". It was undeniable that much *had* been said in the Cragg salons anent the tyranny of Britain and the virtues of Germany; but the Craggs had meant only to be "fair", "broad-minded", and "just". . .

But, oh, if the Craggs had not so bitterly denounced the "War Fund" drives; if they had but supported the Red Cross, and those other various national movements of patriotic altruism! And if Mrs. Cragg had but bought generously of Liberty bonds! And if only the Craggs had not held such extensive possessions in Germany, Austria, and even in the tobacco fields of Turkey—oh, if they had not exhibited such extreme fear of losing these!

But—glad hope!—there was the Cragg sacrifice of Alden to his country's need!

Alas! the story of the youth's enforced enlistment was already the possession of federal agents in Washington; and they knew that the story was unmitigated by his service in Trans-Caucasia.

With the first breath of federal displeasure—though who provoked it, none could say—Crestelridge society fell away from Mrs. Cragg as from a pariah. "If it's true, it's shocking!" exclaimed the horrified Mrs. Tellus. "And it must be true, for Henry says that he can look back now and see that . . ."

"Indeed, yes!" heartily agreed the scandalized Mrs. Kerl. "And they say . . ."

"But have you heard the latest?" put in Mrs. Black, drawing her chair closer and dropping an excess of the war-time allowance of sugar into her tea. "Mrs. Whittier has put her foot down on Ethel's marrying Alden now."

"Oh, I knew that!" Mrs. Tellus asserted, a bit loftily. "And I could tell you something else that would make you sit up. Henry says—but don't breathe a word of this!—Henry says that Mrs. Cragg's husband borrowed money to establish his business, borrowed from a Jew, and—this is what I want you particularly to get—*he never paid it back!*"

Ostracized; terrified; threatened with loss of fortune; loss of her son; possible imprisonment; with the black, piercing eyes of Doctor Roake now gazing always into hers and holding her, fascinated, inert; and with Senator Chaddock hovering ever before her, lavishing his solicitous attentions upon her, now pointing out this danger, now that, now suggesting this course, now another, the poor woman's mentality bade fair to give way under the enormous strain.

"Had you only married again, and married, say, an American," sighed Doctor Roake, "you could have transferred your estate to your husband—that is, placed it in his name—and saved it. But now . . ."

The distracted woman burst into tears. "Doctor," she sobbed, "am I to lose everything? Oh, what have I done? . . . what have I done to deserve this?"

"Nothing, my dear Madam," he returned sadly; "it is what we would term an 'act of God'."

"There is no God!" she cried bitterly. "There is only evil in the world!" And she fain would have declared that its embodiment stalked abroad in the person of Marian Whittier, whose curse lay upon the fair Cragg name.

But, though Mrs. Whittier and Ethel, with curled lips and noses atilt, would not suffer the contamination of Mrs. Cragg's

presence now, the rector was not to be swerved from his duty. Mother and daughter had returned to Crestelridge early in September, and had immediately discovered that, in view of the recent disclosure regarding Mrs. Cragg's disloyalty, the ground for Ethel's chagrin over her engagement to Alden had been quite removed. Ethel—so society sagaciously agreed—had been an innocent victim. "The dear girl!" sighed Mrs. Tellus. "Now she will marry Harris Chaddock—a *much* more suitable match!" And the feminine Black and Kerl contingent concurred heartily in the belief. But the rector gave unwilling ear to the busy gossipers. The Cragg scandal reflected upon St. Jude's, and unless the Cragg prestige were saved—and, incidentally, the Cragg fortune—his church must suffer. Therefore he believed it devolved upon him to render effective a casual remark which Doctor Roake had dropped in his presence. "If Mrs. Cragg were married—and to an American of standing—say, to Senator Chaddock, a gentleman of unquestioned loyalty and acknowledged influence in Washington!" . . . And, to render this course even more probable as the solution of the lady's distracting problem, the senator had admitted, in the presence of the rector and Doctor Roake, that he had long greatly admired Mrs. Cragg, that he had paid her marked attention some years before, and would have offered himself, but that he had discovered and gallantly respected her desire to remain in widowhood and bestow her affection undivided upon her idolized son. . .

A suggestion, nothing more, from their common benefactor, Doctor Roake. And the good doctor was ever dropping suggestions, like living seed, upon the fallow soil of mortal mind, where they sprang up and flowered, some fifty, some a hundred, some a thousand fold.

Late in September, while Alden Cragg sat dully on the troopship bound for Port Said and lived over in his dreams the horrors of Tiflis and Erevan, Mrs. Cragg, pale and emaciated with months of acute suffering, was married to Senator Chaddock in the library of "Craggmont", with the Reverend Wilson Whittier officiating.

CHAPTER 3

LOOKING back to April of that year, and even beyond, the monitors of Crestelridge society recalled now the progressive development of Senator Chaddock's devotion to Mrs. Cragg. And while few had interpreted it as other than a rarely beautiful loyalty from a faithful steward, still there were those

who had even then nodded their heads sagaciously—particularly after Alden's departure—and predicted the very event which had now occurred. Harris Chaddock, noting his father's increasing absorption in Mrs. Cragg, had remarked to him jocularly that marriage might be a good thing for him, might rejuvenate him; but afterward he commented more seriously to Doctor Roake: "Dad's powers seem to be declining. I've noticed it for some months back. His mind isn't as active as it used to be. He imagines he's in love with Mrs. Cragg." But few there were who believed that the proud Englishwoman, whose gods had been money, tradition, and social prestige, would contract another matrimonial alliance, especially with one lacking in this world's goods and, above all, an American!

"But Mrs. Cragg wasn't herself any longer," explained Mrs. Tellus after the bewildering event. "She's a mental wreck and unaccountable. Dear, dear! what a leveler this war is! Who would have believed it!" Certainly not the Telluses, Blacks, and Kerls, whose dull vision saw naught but effects, nor would acknowledge a mental cause, had they discerned it.

To the rector the marriage justified itself in its immediate results. The menace of federal prosecution disappeared. Explanations of Mrs. Cragg's former conduct and attitude now revealed her a much misunderstood woman. The American flag now floated over "Craggmont"; large drafts on the Cragg wealth were received by the treasurers of the various war funds; the Cragg mansion became the locus of a varied assortment of war workers; and the former Mrs. Cragg appeared again at the services in St. Jude's, now gallantly conducted to the Cragg pew by the beaming senator, whose conduct might have been regarded as a bit childish but for the mitigating circumstance of his recently acquired status as benedict.

Deep in her own tired, confused, and troubled mind the former Mrs. Cragg believed that what she had done was done solely for Alden; and when, as a larger measure of protection, she yielded to the persuasion to transfer her estate to other hands, she consoled herself that it was a mother's sacrifice that she was so readily making. Her overtaxed mentality had been too inert fully to comprehend the legal phraseology employed in the transfer, but she believed, in a confused way, that the result of those seemingly endless conferences with her husband, with Doctor Roake, and the rector was the placing of the vast Cragg estate safely in trust until the war should end and her son be returned to her yearning arms.

With the Cragg problems at last in trustworthy hands, the rector again sighed his relief and sought forgetfulness in concentrating on his extensive plans for socialization in connection

with the prominent rôle assigned to St. Jude's in Doctor Roake's world-embracing plan. He resumed his work a bit shaken by recent events, to be sure, and yet with the stimulus drawn from observation of a horizon at last free of menacing clouds.

The Whittier prestige likewise revived. The rocking of the insecure pedestal on which Mrs. Cragg had stood actually had redounded to the strengthening of the Whittier foundation, and Mrs. Whittier and Ethel returned to Crestelridge from their summer outing to a social situation that lent itself readily to their manipulation. Admission to membership in the "Norman Dames" was secured by them both without opposition, and Mrs. Whittier, closely pursuing every advantage, drove hard to a position in the community that was destined to ultimate in social dictatorship. "Lord!" Ethel exclaimed over her chocolates and novels, "but the war has given Mama a boost. If it keeps on there'll be no living with her."

Herculean had been the rector's efforts to clear the Cragg name and to save and augment the Whittier position, social and ecclesiastical, and greatly had they succeeded. But his endeavors to persuade his captious daughter to lower the social bars to Harris Chaddock had proved vain. "He insulted me," Ethel petulantly insisted. "And I will not permit him to enter the house." Well did the autocratic young woman sense her augmented power, and tyrannically did she intend to wield it over Crestelridge society.

But Harris Chaddock, employing an ancient ruse, was soon manifesting an apparent disinterestedness that scandalized the rector anew and brought dismay and chagrin to Ethel. "For heaven's sake, Mama," the daughter cried, when she could no longer control herself, "Harris Chaddock is driving around with that notorious Fay Meuse! She's a screen vampire! Oh, now I shall never, *never* speak to him again!" And she was momentarily glad that she had not written to Alden and broken their engagement.

"Now, daughter," Mrs. Whittier admonished, "don't do anything foolish. You must hold Harris in reserve, now that his father has married the Cragg fortune. Every move in these ticklish times must be made with the thought of 'safety first'. My country!" she sighed, "how things have changed."

But not so readily could the rector dispose of Harris' conduct with the unmentionable Fay Meuse. Harris Chaddock was now a communicant of St. Jude's. Could the rector permit the young man's conduct to become a public refutation of the power of his preaching? Was religion's hold to be thought so slight? Not so! And the good man laid the matter before Harris' mentor, Doctor Roake, for advice.

And the latter laughed and dismissed the case with a light word. But then, after reflection, he decided to call Harris upon the tapis.

And guarded though Harris was in his replies, the clever doctor probed the hurt to the bottom. "Ethel is Penberry's heir," he said, at the close of the conversation, "and it galls you to know that she is going to marry young Cragg."

"She doesn't care for him," Harris protested. "And everybody knows it."

"Well," the doctor returned, with a glint in his eyes, "the Germans to-day are endeavoring to establish the mediæval theory of 'the will to power'. If the State has the *brute* force to do a thing, they say, no *moral* force must be permitted to restrain it. They hark back to those old romantic days when a rejected lover would storm his lady's tower and carry her off by force. And, they claim, she always loved him for it. So they would tell you that women to-day still admire a bold display of physical strength."

"But storming a lady's tower these days is a very different matter," objected the youth.

"Yes," sighed the doctor, turning to his desk to resume work, "for we have fallen upon times of strictly *legal* procedure."

And Harris Chaddock left the doctor's presence irritated because of having been called to account for what was quite his own affair, and yet, despite his resentment, resolving in his mind the doctor's quixotic allusion to the present unromantic era of "legal procedure". . .

As the young man revolved the doctor's suggestion—for suggestion it was—there came to him a sudden illumination of thought. Not, of course, that the doctor had meant just that. No, it was his own clever interpretation of the term "legal procedure". He could *compel* Ethel Whittier to admit him to her presence if he chose. And—the haughty little minx!—he was of a mind to do so. Her unfair discrimination against him was making of him a public jest! It had all but rendered his clubs intolerable!

Then a darker question spurred him. Why should he supinely permit the Penberry heiress to marry Alden Cragg? But could he prevent it? For she would not admit him to her presence; she had sent him a note telling him that, because of his flaunting of Fay Meuse in her face, she never cared to see him again. He was dismissed. . .

But he need not beg her to admit him! He was the Health Executive; and by invoking the police power of the Wess law *he could enter any house in Crestelridge!* And the Wess law conferred upon him even greater power. . .

He spent days darkly ruminating. The little brother of Madeline Nence, he was notified, had developed diphtheria. He quarantined the house and sought Madeline for information. It transpired that Madeline had been with Ethel Whittier much of late. Ah, Ethel might be proved a "carrier"! Humph! He believed now he could prevent her marriage to Alden Cragg! . . .

Thus the days passed. And each day brought a change, for human concepts are but transient, and the mortal mind, though it moves in a circle, must be always amove. No further word had come to his mother from Alden Cragg for weeks, and the poor woman consumed with fear. Senator Chaddock had learned that the youth had been transferred to the Palestine field, but all further effort to get in touch with him thereafter had signally failed.

At length came the report of Alden's disappearance in the action at Beersheba—but the senator mercifully withheld the dire news from the distracted mother. Worry and carking fear were fast sapping her energies. Her brain was tottering. Yet in her sufferings she still sought, not unto her God, but unto her rector. "Oh, Wilson," she wailed, as she paced unsteadily the floor of her boudoir, "why am I so afflicted? If there is a God, why did He permit this terrible war? Oh, Wilson, why?"

But the rector shrank from the challenge. Like the church of which he made his boast, he had found himself messageless in this crisis. Yet he knew, as he sat with bowed head before this type of world-suffering, what Marian would have said. He knew why this war without rival in brutality and bloodshed had burst forth among those nations that were professing to worship the same God and to walk in the faith of a common Saviour. He knew that *"Thy way and thy doings have procured these things unto thee—"* but he would have lost caste had he said it.

Then graver physical disorders began to manifest, and the stricken woman was again borne to her bed. And to her awful fears for Alden were now added her own great horror of death. "Don't let me die, Doctor!" she begged as she tossed in her pain. "Can't you do something? Can't *somebody* do something?" And, to the spiritual guide who had left her comfortless: "Pray, Wilson, pray! Beg God to spare me, and Alden! Oh, is there a God? Is there another life?" Oh, had Wilson Whittier's years of preaching wrought only to such spiritual desolation? She had been a faithful communicant—She was a Christian, in the eyes of a world ignorant of the Christ—Her passport to heaven was duly viséed—Yet the approach of death drove her mad with fear. The heaven of the theologian's fertile

imagination had suddenly evaporated, and in its place was a horrible blank.

The council of physicians at length summoned by Doctor Roake looked grave and solemnly shook their heads. And Ted Sayor, whom Harris Chaddock kept informed of the case, gave vent to his feelings in the privacy of his rooms in cynical strains. "Oh," he observed, "they can draw her teeth and cut out her tonsils, but they won't find the cause of it all, not they! And they can hold forth learnedly on the major brain and the thoracic and lumbar plexuses till they're blue in the face, but she'll die just the same. Lord, if Marian were here! . . . But they'd throw her into the street, for she'd tell 'em that a man is the sum total of his thoughts! . . . And, by heaven! that's just what Mrs. Cragg is to-day."

But, oddly enough, comfort came to the suffering woman, after many days, from a source most unexpected. Ethel Whittier, wild-eyed and pale, trembling as with palsy, crept furtively to the bedside and threw her arms around the patient's neck. "Alden *must* come back!" she whispered hoarsely, excitedly. "He *must!* We both need him! And . . . Marian said that our real needs are always met!"

It was bewildering, yet stimulating, as the totally unexpected so frequently proves, and the patient wondered, but rallied under it. And day after day Ethel crept in and sat there, talking of Alden, planning his return, planning her marriage, her future home, until the patient began to appropriate the girl's disconnected ramblings and feed upon them as truth. It was the most perplexing, confusing, of all that had transpired, this strange conduct of this now wide-eyed, serious girl, who, from an attitude of hot rebellion against her betrothed, now voiced constantly the deepest yearnings for his return and the most stubborn refusal to believe that he would not.

To the rector it was a change of heart that was inexplicable but wonderful. He must regard it as an answer to his prayers, and he devoutly thanked God for it. But Ted Sayor shook his head. "Has Ethel got religion?" he muttered. "I'm beginning to doubt the evidence of my senses! Marian used to say that the five senses report only lies, and now I know it! Oh, it's a mad, mad world—but it's moving fast these days!"

Then, one day, frost touched the gardens of fair "Craggmont" with its death-laden fingers, and over the wires throbbing in the chill wind came simultaneously to the rectory and to "Craggmont" the news that Alden Cragg was dead. Major Otto Hoeffel, of the German Staff, had reported from Jerusalem to the British Command that Private Cragg had died, a captive of war, from wounds received in the battle of Beersheba.

The rector staggered under the blow. Mrs. Whittier watched the Cragg millions ooze through her fingers, then fainted. Ethel uttered a piercing cry and dropped upon a sofa, where she sat staring straight ahead, dull-eyed and motionless.

In "Craggmont" a servant received the message and took it, with great indiscretion, to her mistress. The latter, believing that at last had come news from her long-silent son, tore it feverishly open. . .

The day nurse, entering at that moment, rushed to snatch the message from the patient's hands ere she might read it. But when she reached the bedside the mother of Alden Cragg was dead.

CHAPTER 4

AGAIN the cleansing winds blew, an icy blast. Again the dun clouds dropped down a covering of white. And some of Crestelridge's multitude of sins lay buried beneath the soft mantle in a new-made grave—the Chaddock mausoleum was as yet only in plan.

Again the chimes of St. Jude's rang out upon the midnight air. And their peal mingled with the shots and shouts, song and psalmody, that gave noisy sepulture to the dead year and raucous welcome to the new. But amid the rejoicing and revelry, in cabaret, dive, church, or mansion, none knew—nor had cared—that the year just tolled by the leaden hammer had witnessed the literal fulfillment of Scriptural prophecy voiced with inerrant accuracy twenty-five centuries before. A new era was born in the infant year: soon its spirit would be voiced in the cynical retort: "Uplifted? La, la! I prefer to be amused."

The fourth year of the most momentous upheaval in history was already well advanced. Human skill was still feverishly designing new enginery of slaughter; natural science was yet desperately draining its resources for more comprehensive modes of death. Darwinism stood at the zenith: in the mysterious essence and forces of matter lay present and future man—his past an ape. Matter, insentient and paradoxically endowed with mind, was humanity's undisputed god, a veritable trinity of money, human intellect, and the fleeting, corruptible body of flesh.

And the mesmerized worshipers of the world's false god dropped, dropped, dropped, like sere leaves in the blast, consumed with disease or dissolved in the gases of their own scientific concocting. Yet would they not learn that the false

sense of a mind in matter is the sole cause of humanity's woes; that the sufferings of the flesh are traceable to mental causes; and that the breaking up of the false beliefs constituting humanity's sham god had brought upon the terrified world its Armageddon.

With the beginning of 1918 Russia was admittedly definitely out of the war, and Germany, for the first time, was free to concentrate on the western front. The red hordes of anarchy were streaming out of the north, symbols of the pernicious doctrine of free-will, wherein man can choose aught but Principle. France stood back panting, useless for purposes of general offense; the burden of initiative lay now full on Britain. Teuton plans for a crushing blow were at last perfected. America was plunging to the fore to stem it. And the world outside—and Crestelridge—crouched, with bated breath, and waited, watched, and waited. The weapons of their warfare were carnal—none more so than the carnal fear which fell like a shadow from the American Brobdingnan across the morale of the Hun. In that shadow the German spirit disintegrated.

In the shadow of fear the spirit of Crestelridge likewise moldered. The decay had found early externalization in "Craggmont", whose once proud mistress, betrayed by her worldly gods, had been mesmerized by fear unto death. It found externalization in the rectory, where the Reverend Wilson Whittier, driven by vague, indefinite fear—fear that eluded outline, yet was as tangible as earth—grew daily thinner, increasingly nervous, and more mentally confused. Yet his salary had been increased by a mollified vestry to an ample figure; St. Jude's was fairly bursting with its numerous humming activities; the Whittiers dressed and entertained now as never before; the rector's worldly-wise consort conducted her puppet show with never such élan and piped never so shrilly for a society that madly danced; and Mrs. Whittier's family tree still proudly reared its lofty frond high above the humbler shrubs of the parish. . .

But in vain did the rector seek relief in these distractions, and in the prescriptions of the sympathetic Doctor Roake. "I must go away!" he desperately insisted; "I must go away!" And yet he somehow knew that he would not, that he could not, for a power held him now that he might not break.

In Ethel Whittier the externalization was most pronounced. Her former gayety was now strangely gone; gone too was her former flippant defiance of conventionality and public opinion. Her mood had suddenly become one of constant, abrupt, and sharp changes: now she sat sullen, hateful, silent; now her

anger burst forth violently, indiscriminately; now it assumed particularity in the upbraiding of her parents for their shallow views of life, for the puerile character of the rector's preaching, for the mother's frivolous aims. Again, she would sit with eyes wandering furtively, or would weep and cringe and creep into her mother's arms and lie sobbing and trembling. Doctor Roake she would not see, but—to the increased perplexity of her parents—she called Dr. Harris Chaddock, called him again and often, and held him, clung to him. . .

"It is because of Alden's death," the rector tried to assure himself and his anxious wife. "The blow has affected her terribly." And Mrs. Whittier, wiping her eyes, agreed. "My country!" she would often exclaim, "how things have changed . . . How things have changed!" And her thought would turn to Harris Chaddock.

And yet Dr. Harris Chaddock came now only professionally —just as for some weeks he had been professionally visiting homes in that neighborhood to detect "carriers" and to check progress of the diphtheritic contagion that still prevailed. And he too appeared ill at ease and apprehensive. "I know he wants to marry Ethel," Mrs. Whittier would frequently insist to the distraught rector, "but something seems to have come between them. Do you suppose it's that awful Fay Meuse?"

"But Harris promised me he would not see that dreadful woman again," the rector answered. "As for Ethel, it wouldn't look well for her to marry Harris so soon," he quite properly objected. "Why, poor Alden has been dead only a few weeks! Besides, only a short time ago Ethel would not permit Harris to see her. Can she want to marry him *now*? It . . . it is *dreadfully* perplexing!"

"Yes, I am sure she wants him," Mrs. Whittier persisted. "And, Papa, the match would be *most* desirable. Harris is likely to have money now, you know. The senator seems to be failing. Can't you speak to Harris and learn his intentions? It would at least relieve this killing strain."

Nor was the externalization of fear confined to the rectory. Ted Sayor had been wondering, often, and with no abatement of his apprehension, whether, after all, his immunity from army service was worth its cost. It had been no easy matter to convince the authorities that he was tubercular, although Doctor Roake had rendered yeoman aid. The strain had told on Ted, and he had been obliged to yield to the doctor's insistence on diet and tonics—and to an injection or two of an energizing serum with which the doctor had been long experimenting. Now, as the weeks went by, Ted began to view with genuine alarm the steady decline of his former robustness. Yet

for safety's sake—heavens! how the federal prison loomed in imagination—he must continue to seek unto the doctor, to have cultures taken, examinations made, treatment prescribed. It was all against his principles. He hated it! Loathed it! Shame scorched him. But fear held him. And daily he saw himself become more inextricably entangled. "I'll dish the whole damned mess!" he vowed. But he realized, after more sober thought—realized it with a dulling sense of horror—that the thing was now impossible. He had entered the broad gate, entered it willingly, gladly, and it had closed behind him.

The darksome fear that lay athwart Senator Chaddock's life was less definite. The rapidity with which events of the most startling nature had followed one upon another in the past few months seemed to have left him mentally dazed. True, his ambitions had been met in a degree that exceeded his weirdest fancy—but he was still far from happy. He had coveted "Craggmont" and all that it symbolized; and the manner in which it had come to him was, after all, not of his own making. His marriage to Mrs. Cragg had been, if he might so express it, altruistic. He had saved her and the Cragg estate thereby. And he sincerely lamented her death—or, perhaps better, the unfortunate manner of her taking off. But the thought haunted him that he had still an obligation to meet, and that the meeting of it entailed a burden that would surely prove too heavy for his shoulders. But, worse—he could not explain it—he was aware of a change within himself—a change that had stolen upon him subtly, like a thief—and Harris had been so cruel as to inform him that he was becoming senile! God! *that* was a fear! . . .

The first snows of the new year were drifting softly about "Craggmont" when the senator, who sat asleep in his easy chair before the open fire late one afternoon, was aroused by his secretary. "Beg pardon," the latter said nervously, "but there is a call on the 'phone . . . for Mrs. Cragg. . ."

The senator started up from his chair. "From . . . Mrs. . . . *Cragg!*" he gasped.

"*For* Mrs. Cragg, sir," the secretary corrected. "I . . . I thought perhaps you had better reply, sir. He is holding the wire."

"*He!*" The senator's knees shook as he rose and, assisted by the secretary, crept slowly over to the cabinet telephone on the library table.

"This is Senator Chaddock," he said nervously through the instrument. "Mrs. Cragg? No, she is not here. Who's speaking? No, I say, Mrs. Cragg is not here. Where is she? Why . . . why . . . she's *dead!*"

He dropped the receiver, crouched fearfully over the table, and turned his white face up to the gaping secretary. A strange sound had burst from the instrument, and died away in a hollow rattle. The senator fell back and motioned to the telephone. "Quick!" he commanded hoarsely. "Ask him who he is!"

The secretary sprang to the instrument. But the one who had called was gone. The secretary hurriedly demanded of "Central" whence the call had come, and was informed that it was from a public telephone, probably one located in the depot.

"The *depot!*" The senator clutched a chair to keep from falling. His face was deathly white, his limbs shook. The secretary hastened to his support. "Call up Doctor Roake!" the senator gasped. "Tell him I'm coming down to his office immediately! I . . . Ring for Jedkins! Get me into my clothes! Call my car!"

Something had smitten him with deadly fear. Perhaps it was a presentiment, a foreboding; but as he was whirled away in his limousine a few minutes later his mind, now unwontedly stimulated, reverted for just an instant to that bleak Sunday morning when the Cragg bell cracked. And his heart all but stopped.

Through the down-town streets the white snow whirled and drifted. But it was no whiter than the hair of a tall soldier, clad in the British uniform, who came, like a spectre, through it. His head was bent, and his step was at times unsteady. And a group of curious boys followed him, pointing, whispering, speculating.

Before the great building that housed Doctor Roake's magnificent offices Senator Chaddock's car drew up and the lackey sprang to open the door. At the same moment Doctor Roake himself, fur-clad and natty, came out of the building and approached the car.

"Get in here!" cried the senator hoarsely. The startled doctor complied. Then, as the door closed upon the two, the senator seized the doctor's arm. "I had a call," he began in a shaking tone. But his voice fell abruptly, and his hand closed over the doctor's arm like a vise. "Good God!" he whispered, staring through the glass, "who is *that?*"

The white-haired soldier, followed by the wondering street urchins, loomed through the storm. His shoulders were stooped, and his eyes held to the pavement. The senator shrank back, with mouth agape and trembling finger poised in air. The doctor gazed at the approaching figure with slowly widening eyes. Then he uttered an exclamation and sprang out.

The soldier came abreast of the car and halted, as he saw the doctor blocking his way. The latter stood for a moment uncertainly; then, with a slight animal crouch, he crept closer, his eyes fixed and glowing. Of a sudden he straightened up. "Who are you?" he demanded, and his voice was like a feral snarl.

The soldier's reply came low and hollow. "I am Alden Cragg."

The doctor recoiled. Then—rare event!—his wits seemed to leave him. "You . . . you . . . are . . . *dead!*" he gasped.

The other regarded him with his great, luminous orbs. "I was," he answered slowly, and in a voice that struck chill to the doctor's bones, "but I have come back."

CHAPTER 5

ALDEN CRAGG, not only alive, but actually again in their midst! The discovery, heralded by telephone, messenger, and evening "extras", shook Crestelridge with such force as to drive it for the moment from its contemplation of Self. It was as if the passing storm had dropped him! And there were those who sat and thought long on the portentous event —and some caught their breath as they thought.

He had strangely refused to go up to Doctor Roake's office with the doctor and Senator Chaddock—so these two afterward reported. He had appeared stunned, they said. And small wonder! for he had returned in complete ignorance of happenings in Crestelridge since midsummer, and had just been apprised of events that must have pierced his soul. . .

He had endeavored to cable his mother from Port Said—so the doctor's report amplified—but had been prevented by the priority of war needs. Again, at Southampton, he had tried to get word to her of his journey homeward; but of his message, left in strange hands—who knew? So many occurrences, from the merely irritating to the fatal, had now to be laid at Fate's door. He had comforted himself—so he had brokenly told them—with the assurance from his superiors that the report of his return from German captivity would be regularly made in due season by the War Office. He had supposed it had reached Crestelridge long since. But Britain was just now concentrating on more vital matters, and the report had been delayed.

On landing in New York he had hurried through the required formalities, and hastened to catch the already depart-

ing train for Crestelridge. Then, home at last, he had called "Craggmont" to announce the glad tidings. . .

"I presume he wandered from the telephone in a dazed condition after the senator's incautious statement," the doctor continued, when reporting the startling news late that afternoon to the shaking rector over the wire. "But he said he stopped in at the office of the *Courier,* where he made himself known to the editor and learned everything. Said he didn't know he had been reported dead. Terrible, isn't it? That is, assuming that he is *really* Alden Cragg. His appearance is shocking—looks like a ghost—and his hair is snow white! Senator Chaddock is greatly affected. Insists that he is an impostor and not Alden. You know, there are so many cases of double identity. What makes it more suspicious is that he wouldn't talk much. Said absolutely nothing about his experience abroad. And he insisted on going straight to the rectory . . . is on his way up there now in the senator's car. So we will leave you to judge of his identity. . . Oh, yes, he has his papers, and his passport. . . But those things are easily obtainable under circumstances such as are involved in this case. However, we will leave him to you. Call me back as soon as you can."

Thus had Alden Cragg returned. No bands had greeted him; no triumphal arch had spanned his way; no clamoring mob or lauding citizenry had formed his eager escort. He had returned unheralded, unwelcomed, a lowly private, without honors, without record.

He came alone, back to his shattered world—a now hideous world—from whose life and sympathy he was completely isolated. And as he entered it again he viewed it with an awful sense of remoteness across the huge gap which his climacteric experience, like a great earthquake, had rent between him and it—viewed it as perhaps Abraham had viewed the Canaan which he was sent to possess—viewed it with the full knowledge that he could not be reabsorbed by it, yet that here lay his unfinished problems, here awaited his Peniel.

He had come knowing that, as the world would see it, he was beginning life over again, starting from a fresh and untried point. He knew that now he must find and demonstrate his rightful place, and that in the search he must battle with the full power of circumstances. Yet he could not have outlined in advance the fell nature of those circumstances, could not have formulated in anticipation the tangled problems which he had returned to face, alone. During those weary weeks of the homeward voyage he had clung only to his new-found God, in Whom he knew he must now seek his rightful status. Beyond his sense of his immanent God all was chaos.

He had returned to Crestelridge with his affections for his mother, for Ethel, for the world, enriched by his awful but priceless experience; he had been met at the outset by another blast of evil whose mesmerism for the moment overwhelmed him. Still in a state of bewilderment, he had struck out on the one visible path of duty, the one that led to Ethel.

He had not been informed in his brief, strained conversation that afternoon with Doctor Roake and Senator Chaddock in the latter's car that Ethel was wildly praying for his return. He could not remember that they had given him anything beyond a few meager facts regarding his mother's astounding marriage and pitiable death. And the shock of it had left his thought in a confused welter of sorrow, condemnation, and stinging pain. When he entered the rectory he was in a state of benumbed calm.

The rector greeted him oddly, timidly, with undisguised embarrassment and a strange lack of cordiality. Greeted him with the gawking wonder that held his bulging eyes to the man's white hair, to his white features that seemed so diaphanous, to the lines so indistinct. Mrs. Whittier, though profuse in her welcome and voluble in expressions of wonder and surprise, was unable to hide her state of extreme nervous tension. But Ethel, seeming not to notice Alden's altered appearance, flew to him and threw herself into his arms, while her emotion, now fully loosed, burst into hysteria. Alden stood, stunned afresh, yet thinking vaguely of his separation from this girl a few months before. Then his benumbed spirit instinctively rose to meet a further onslaught of evil presaged by her wild and unaccountable conduct.

"It has been terrible!" groaned Mrs. Whittier, raising her eyes to Alden during her ministrations to the distraught girl, whom she had at length persuaded from his arms to the davenport. "If you had not come back she would have died!"

Alden, clutching at his own wits, went mechanically to the davenport where Ethel was huddled and sat down beside her. She threw herself upon him again and clung, sobbing, choking, now laughing shrilly, now scolding, now babbling incoherently. Then, as her emotion slowly spent itself, she lay against him, holding his hand and whimpering plaintively.

The unhappy rector heaved a long, gasping sigh and fell into a chair, where he sat regarding the girl with frowning concentration. "Thank God you have come back!" he murmured at length, turning to Alden. Yet even as he expressed his gratitude he voiced the tormenting suspicion implanted so early by Doctor Roake. "But you return so . . . changed! Your hair . . . how could it have turned so white in these few

months? Perhaps I should not recall to you memories which may cause pain . . . but you are not the Alden Cragg who left us. . ." He paused and sat again staring hard at Alden.

The latter looked up at the rector. "No," he said, speaking low.

The rector's brows lifted, but he waited. Then, as Alden gave no sign of continuing: "You are so changed," he reiterated; "but you also find many distressing changes here. The . . . the whole world seems to have changed. Your dear mother . . . she has entered the . . . heavenly rest. . ." He stopped short and hung, gazing in fascination into Alden's eyes. He was held by the strange look in them, a light, a gleam that was uncanny, spectral. And he shivered.

"But"—Mrs. Whittier hurried to fill the embarrassing hiatus—"Alden comes back to us looking more mature . . . and yet not really older, but more . . . experienced."

"He must have seen much service," the rector suggested, finding relief in the thought.

"None," said Alden.

The rector and his wife both started in amazement. Even Ethel glanced up at him in surprise.

"But you were taken prisoner! And reported dead!" the rector cried. And then he suddenly recalled other portions of Doctor Roake's telephoned report. "Er . . . Doctor Roake said," he went on, "that you told him you had come back from . . . from . . ."

"From the dead," Mrs. Whittier finished eagerly, leaning forward, with her eyes fastened upon him.

Alden's gaze drifted beyond them, as if into unfathomable space. "I was thought to have died," he murmured absently.

"Oh," exclaimed Mrs. Whitter, "tell us about it!"

"Many would have died, but for the wonderful skill shown by the surgeons in this war," the relieved rector observed, now sure of his subject. "You were wounded in battle, we learned. It must have been serious, judging from the surgeon's report."

"The surgeon pronounced me dead. The order for burial had been issued," was the unaffected reply.

"What!" The rector was almost on his feet. Mrs. Whittier sat open-mouthed. Ethel paled and drew timidly away. "But . . . what saved you?" the rector gasped.

Alden remained for a moment silent. Then he answered: "The Christ."

"Oh!" cried Mrs. Whittier and Ethel in unison. And Ethel's lip began to curl.

"Ah!" sighed the rector, settling back in his chair again

in manifest relief. "They prayed for you. The chaplains rendered good service. Yes, I have known of other instances where, when medical science failed, prayer moved God to save the patient. I am indeed glad you had the experience; it will do St. Jude's good to hear about it. I . . . yes, I think I will arrange for you to address our congregation . . . an excellent idea!"

"I am glad you will let me speak to St. Jude's," said Alden, scarce above a whisper. And there was that same far-away look in his eyes. "I have come back to them."

"You have come back to *me,* haven't you, Aldy-boy?" Ethel had crept closer and was nervously squeezing his hand. The hunted look had returned to her eyes.

He shivered slightly as her words fell upon his ears, and he swallowed hard. He turned to her and looked down into her feverish eyes, looked long and wonderingly . . . so long that she could not sustain his gaze, and averted her head. "Yes," gently, "I have come back to . . . you."

"And we will be married, soon?" she played with his fingers and laughed fitfully while she talked.

"I think you nearly lost her to Harris Chaddock," laughed Mrs. Whittier, with an awkward attempt at jocosity.

Ethel gave a little gasp and shrank back. Mrs. Whittier went blithely on. "Harris has been appointed Health Executive. He has been inspecting everybody in our neighborhood. . ."

"We all had to submit to it," the rector added, smiling dubiously. "The Wess law compels it, you know."

Alden knew, but he remained silent. He had given the Wess bill his ardent support, had fought for it, had bitterly condemned its detractors. . .

"Ethel quarreled with Harris," Mrs. Whittier babbled along. "Wouldn't let him see her. But," she giggled, "he got around it by law, the Wess law, you know. He had to examine her on account of being suspected a 'carrier' of diphtheria. . ."

"Alden!" Ethel started up excitedly. "When shall we be married?"

He hesitated a second, and a shade passed over his eyes. "Whenever . . . you . . . wish," he answered low.

"Now! Now! To-day! Right away!" she burst out, springing to her feet.

"Ethel!" cried her parents, aghast at the prospect of another outbreak.

Alden looked at the girl in heightened wonder. "Very well," he said quietly.

"Ethel! Child! You . . . you are overwrought!" exclaimed the rector. "Remember, Alden," he continued excitedly, "how

she has suffered from your absence and the shocking report of your . . . your death. Her nervous system has been almost shattered! Ethel, you must wait . . ."

"I will be married *now!*" the girl cried wildly. "Now! . . ."

"Yes, darling, yes!" Mrs. Whittier had hurried to her side and taken her in her arms. "Yes, yes! It will be right away! In a few days, say, a week . . . a week, darling. Just long enough not to shock society! Alden is willing . . . aren't you, Alden? And so is Papa! Yes, yes! A week, no more! She is so afraid of losing you again, Alden!"

Ethel sank down again beside Alden, but he appeared not to notice her. The rector turned his troubled eyes from the girl to Alden. The latter seemed to be miles away. The tense situation was become unbearable. The rector must have relief. "I . . . er . . . you have asked nothing about your . . . your dear mother's last hours," he began uneasily.

Alden slowly turned to him. "She was in your charge," he said.

"True, yes, yes!" the rector hastily agreed. "And I sought to do my full duty. Er . . . we will drive out to the . . . to her . . . grave. . ."

"I do not care to go."

"What? you would not visit your mother's grave?"

"There is no one there," was the quiet answer.

The perplexed rector did not press the point. Nor did he believe that he had fully comprehended. But of one thing he was now quite convinced: this man might have been Alden Cragg, but he had suffered a change that rendered him somebody quite different.

"Have you any plans for the future, Alden?" asked Mrs. Whittier in a strained voice.

"I am still a British soldier. I am under orders," he replied.

"But you can marry! You can marry!" Ethel broke out afresh.

"I can marry, yes," he assured her.

"Er . . . by the way," the rector continued, "do you expect to live in . . . er . . . 'Craggmont'?"

Alden threw him a look of surprise. "Why do you ask?" he said.

"Why . . . er . . . Senator Chaddock lives there now. Did he speak to you about it? No? You see, the . . . that is, on account of your dear mother's embarrassing position—for which she was *entirely* blameless—the Cragg estate was . . . well, placed in trust, so to speak . . . handled by the senator. . . Oh, everything perfectly regular, of course!"

Alden did not reply, and an embarrassing pause followed.

Then the rector coughed several times, shifted the position of his legs, and finally resumed. "Your dear mother died intestate, and so of course the senator comes in for his share of the estate . . . as her husband, you know. . . But I can't explain. . . I really don't understand it all myself. . . However, it is all perfectly regular. . ."

"But," Mrs. Whittier put in, "doesn't Alden inherit the estate? You told me he did."

"Certainly," the rector hastened to reassure her. "The estate is in trust, I believe . . . or something like that . . . being held until Alden's return . . . but the report came that Alden had died. . ."

Mrs. Whittier glanced a bit wildly at Ethel and made as if to speak further. But she held herself, although the lines about her mouth had drawn down, and the cordiality had suddenly gone from her manner.

"But," continued the rector, although shifting to another topic, "there are a thousand questions I want to ask you, Alden, about your war experience. Er . . . first, did you happen to meet . . . er . . . anybody you knew?"

Alden sat for some moments in deep study. Then he raised his head. "I met David Barach," he said in a low tone.

"Who? That . . . that *Jew?*" gasped the rector, his thought flying back to the awful Sunday when the Jew paid a visit to St. Jude's.

"Ugh!" cried Mrs. Whittier, shuddering.

Ethel, for the first time during the unnatural conversation, now voiced a thought that did not pertain to herself. "Why didn't you shoot him?" she demanded. "You know you always hated Jews."

Alden did not answer. And the sigh that escaped him was inaudible.

There was another long pause. Then Ethel roused suddenly, with a manifestation of her former audacious and tantalizing spirit. "Papa is dying to ask if you met Marian anywhere," she snickered, "only he doesn't dare."

"Ethel!" her shocked parents again exclaimed in unison. And Mrs. Whittier hastened to add in explanation: "We have heard nothing from Marian since she arrived in London last May, and naturally we are anxious."

"And they are afraid to ask the Galuth," Ethel pursued mercilessly.

"I . . ." The rector coughed again. Mrs. Whittier's flaming eyes were bent upon her daughter, but fear restrained her tongue. "We trust that she is living," the rector concluded feebly.

"I hope she's dead," said Ethel flatly.

Alden turned quickly upon the girl. "She is alive!" he cried.

The rector and his wife were again violently startled. Ethel sat up quickly. "How do you know?" she demanded, her eyes snapping.

Alden turned from her. His head drooped, and he sat gazing at the floor. Then: "I no longer believe in death," he murmured.

The strained conversation was at that point interrupted by a call from the telephone. The rector answered it, and returned shortly with the information that Senator Chaddock was about to dine, and requested Alden's presence. He had sent his car back for him. He also desired the rector to impress upon the youth that "Craggmont" was still his home. . .

Mrs. Whittier could not repress the cry of relief that burst from her. Ethel's lips again curled slightly, and a hard look came into her eyes, but she rose with Alden and put her odorous lips up to be kissed. "Come to me in the morning," she purred. She seemed quite her old self now. "We have lots to plan, you and I. And be sure to wear your uniform."

"We shall not rest until we hear all about your war experience, Alden," the rector added nervously, taking the latter's hand but avoiding his big eyes. . .

And when Alden had gone, the Whittier family sank into their chairs and sat staring at one another as if they had been entertaining a ghost.

CHAPTER 6

BUT that he had been overwhelmed by the mesmerism of the moment, his faculties in a measure benumbed by the report of occurrences during his absence from Crestelridge, Alden Cragg might have read in the words and manner of the rector's family an augury. As it was, his waking thought recurred often, during his ride to "Craggmont," to Ethel's feverish eagerness, her outbreak of wild hysteria, her constantly shifting moods. Her sustained preference for him over Harris Chaddock held his wonder. He had returned hoping . . .

But it was an unrighteous hope, and now abandoned. He had come back to Crestelridge to carry forward into living those ideals which had been born with him in his new birth. Because of his own transmuting experience, he saw these people now as, under divine Principle, they must some day

reveal their true selves, rather than as they had once seemed. His task was to hold fast to the exchange of human concepts for the true consciousness, and to show them how to do likewise. His sense of responsibility was therefore tremendous. He regarded himself as a Dives privileged to return. That he had come with a message divine had been demonstrated at the outset by evil's efforts to repel him. Its shots, with an aim that was deadly true, had struck him squarely as he entered Crestelridge. It was a repetition of error's age-old attempt to destroy Truth by killing its bearer. Yet he was on his feet and going forward.

But for his own rebirth in the fires of war, the cruel blows dealt him as he entered Crestelridge would have felled him. But that the veil had been raised, he had held Marian Whittier responsible for his mother's death. Now he could no longer be deceived into attributing effects to personal causes. It was that "wickedness in high places" which had struck his mother down. He knew it now under the name of mortal mind, that subtle serpent of old that strikes unseen and turns the responsibility for its diabolism upon frail images of flesh called men. He saw its workings in the thin features and trembling limbs of the rector, in the fear-motived efforts of Mrs. Whittier to cover error, in Ethel's unbridled conduct. He read its fell action in the furtive manner and ill-disguised hatred of Harris Chaddock, whom he had met for a mutually embarrassing moment as the latter was setting out from "Craggmont" for his club. He stood astonished at its visible effects upon the senator who, at table that evening, sat disintegrating before his very eyes.

But in Doctor Roake there was no visible indication of change. He appeared the same embodiment of masterful personality that Alden had known and so greatly admired in the days now gone. His manner toward host and guest was engagingly suave, even delicate; his words were urbane, sympathetic; and his voice still held the rich, musical quality that had ever given it such wondrous charm. And yet, in the moment of encountering Alden that afternoon, he had flashed—Alden could not say what. But it had deeply impressed him.

Again within the portals of beautiful "Craggmont", a flood of emotions rose upon the returned youth. But they were human, and he battled them back. His mother was not there—and yet, to those who had eyes, she had not left. Nor was she in that lone, snow-covered grave that the rector would have had him visit with his tears and forlorn theological hopes. His business now was Life, not death.

His appraisal of "Craggmont" was perfunctory. He had

loved it once as the visible expression of his ideal of ease in matter. Now he realized the fearful menace in such an ideal, and in the worship of its manifestation. He asked permission to greet Jedkins and the other servants who had remained; and he spoke kindly to them, while they gazed at his white hair and translucent features in gaping awe. . .

"Egad! it's a dream!" exclaimed the senator, when they were seated in the great dining hall. And he glanced nervously at the doctor, on Alden's right, for approval.

Alden's eyes swept the rich room, with its deep panels of rare woods, its massive beams, its costly carvings and tapestries, all mellow in the subdued light. He studied the glittering white napery of choicest linen, the heavy silver, the orchid centerpiece. He showed embarrassment when he tasted the delicate food. His thought tore its leash and flew back to Tiflis and Erevan, and he saw again the death-smitten crew milling, milling—heard again the moaning "*O-na-ne*"—saw the groveling, starving wretches betrayed by their brothers—and he buried his face in his hands and burst into tears.

It was a passing emotion, though it startled the senator into a promiscuous ordering of brandy and aromatic salts, and caused the doctor to lift his brows in amazed wonder. And yet the youth's emotion was quite natural, the doctor reflected, the circumstances duly considered.

"It *is* hard, my boy," he said in his gentlest tones. "Your mother was your life, we know. But there is still much to live for. And you are now among good friends who share your loss and will help you to bear it. Come, we must live in the present. Let me tell you of my experiences in Washington since we entered the war." And the doctor launched into a lively and voluble narrative that covered Alden's embarrassment and set the perturbed senator again at ease.

"Now we want you to understand," the doctor remarked kindly in concluding his narration, "that we respect your reticence in regard to discussing the war. I don't wonder that returned soldiers want to forget as quickly as possible the horrible butchery and the suffering—Oh, what about Marian Whittier? She seems to have disappeared completely. Did you by any chance run across her?"

The question was thrust at Alden with brutal directness. And he could not avoid the answer. "Yes," he said frankly, "in Palestine."

Neither the doctor nor the senator appeared surprised at this reply, and Alden wondered.

The doctor now leaned perceptibly nearer. "Do you know where she is?" he asked.

Alden shook his head. "I left her in Jerusalem. She was with . . . an ambulance corps."

The doctor studied the youth for a further moment. He had another question—nay, two, although he knew that the one referring to Otto Hoeffel could not be voiced yet. "What became of that fellow Barach, I wonder? He enlisted in your unit, did he not?"

Alden threw him a quizzical glance that divined nothing. "Yes," he replied, "he was taken prisoner, but was released when Jerusalem fell. I left him with the British in Palestine."

Again the doctor fell to studying Alden, his sharp eyes searching, searching. They bored into the white skin, they followed the almost invisible facial lines, they peered eagerly through the white hair. Then, where the hair above the temple had been slightly disarranged, they lighted upon the long, jagged scar. And there they clung, boring, piercing, digging. . .

"It's a damned outrage, this rationing by the Government!" the senator abruptly began to growl. "A pound of sugar to a person. . . Egad! Why, that's what started this war—shortage of food in the world!"

The war caused by shortage of food! Alden looked up at the senator. "You mean . . . *material* food?" he queried.

"Egad! what other kind is there?" the senator laughed. And yet Alden remembered that Sunday in the rectory when Marian had attributed the war to spiritual starvation.

"The development of the population in the United States so depleted the food supply as to make the European war inevitable," the doctor explained. "Germany was really forced to fight, because of the rising food costs. Great Britain was throttling her economically."

"But," the senator resumed with a titter, "I've got twenty barrels of sugar in the cellar, and barrels and barrels of flour, and bacon! Egad! *I* won't starve . . . nor go dry. . . I've got enough liquor stowed away to outlast a dozen wars! Wartime prohibition! Egad! I've fooled Wilson, I have!"

Alden looked at the man, and as he looked a great surge of pity rose within him. Then, suddenly remembering: "I wish to thank you, Senator, for the message which you sent me by the rector," he said.

"Eh? Oh, of course you'll make 'Craggmont' your home!" the senator exclaimed heartily. "Have your old rooms. Harris isn't here much. . . Down at his club . . . or with that damned Fay Meuse. . . That isn't her real name. . . He's always with her. . . She telephones to him, here. . . Going to marry her, I guess . . . I'll kick him out!" His words trailed off indistinctly, and he settled back heavily.

"Your luggage down at the depot?" queried the doctor. "The senator will send for it to-night. . ."

"This minute," the senator put in, rousing up. And he turned and gave the order to Jedkins.

"Thank you," said Alden. "And in the morning I must go to the bank. The British Government doesn't pay its privates highly, you know."

"Quite right," the doctor returned. "The senator has been speaking to me about it, and he will arrange a bank deposit for you, in the nature of an allowance. It will appear rather small, I fear, compared with what you have been accustomed to spend. The senator wants you to know that, while there can be no possible reflection on your own or your mother's loyalty, still it seemed wise to place the estate in trust, and with the senator in charge. You will agree with me when you learn the detailed reasons. But owing to the war, there has been a considerable—though temporary—depreciation in the returns from the Cragg investments. Your mother bought Primal Motors . . ."

"For its debts, I remember," said Alden. "I wish to adjust that matter now, and take care of the stockholders who lost." His thought was on David Barach.

"Surely, surely," the doctor agreed. "But, after you left, your mother invested a great deal of money in the rehabilitation of Primal Motors, and the new company has since proved a constant drain on the estate. Not but what everything will come out all right in the end," he added reassuringly, "but for the present you will have to practice rather strict economy, I am sorry to say."

It was all a jumble to Alden, whose knowledge of business had hitherto scarcely extended beyond that involved in the drawing of a check; and as he reflected upon it now his cheeks burned and he drew a sigh.

"Some of the new investments," the doctor resumed, watching Alden narrowly, "have turned out badly, and there's no denying that the British Government is to blame. It's the same old story: England greedily grasping for trade even before the war is over. World-domination through her army and navy. Look at her hold on Batum and Baku. She is positively insatiable! She's turned the trick on oil, and as a consequence the Cragg estate is considerably poorer."

While the doctor had been speaking the senator had sat looking curiously from one to the other. At times he nodded his head, and his lips moved in confirmation of the doctor's words. At times his eyes roved wildly, with an odd gleam in them. At length he settled down in his chair and dropped his head.

"It is a sad commentary on the cordial relations supposed to arise from the Anglo-Israel idea," the doctor commented. "I don't suppose you heard anything about that craze over there. If you did, let me know. It is a curious psychological phenomenon, developed out of the war. And it's a very deceptive one. Great Britain is simply hoodwinking the American people with this preposterous theory, and for reasons which will be divulged when it suits her purposes. But, I declare, I beg your pardon! I forgot for the moment that you are a British subject. But . . ."

Thus the conversation ran on, with the talking done almost exclusively by the doctor. And as topic chased topic, seeds were dropped here and there that would flower in due season, and with what manner of fruit—who knew? Yet in the end it was evident that the doctor was not satisfied. "What are your plans?" he at length asked, and quite abruptly. "For you will not be called back into the service, I am sure."

Alden hesitated. "I have no plans that are definite," he answered slowly. "I wish to . . . to look about for a few days."

"You must not remain idle, you know," the doctor suggested. "I can use you, if you wish. I don't forget your assistance in getting the Wess bill passed. Now we have others . . ."

"I could not support them if they resemble the Wess bill," said Alden quickly. "My support of that measure was . . . a mistake."

Ah! something had happened over there. The doctor had been certain of it. "But they are beneficent measures," he protested mildly, "dealing with public affairs. And surely you will admit that public affairs need attention."

Yes, Alden admitted it. And he admitted that "he who shall introduce into public affairs the principles of primitive Christianity will change the face of the world." But only with the principles of *primitive* Christianity. It was the pagan alloy, developed in the religio-political systems of the day, that had muddied public affairs so terribly and harried the world into a suicidal war. Alden knew it now—but he did not say so.

Again the doctor shifted the conversation, as skillfully as if conducting a laboratory clinic. And again he sped along from subject to subject, now serious, now merry, always watching, always with his big black eyes clinging to Alden's.

Then he spoke sharply to the senator; and the latter roused, and took part in the dinner and in the less serious portions of the conversation. But Alden did not fail to note that always the senator referred his statements to the doctor, and always he appeared relieved when the latter manifested his approbation.

The dinner concluded, the doctor again found occasion for genuine wonder. "What! you have sworn off?" he exclaimed when Alden refused the rare liquor. "And you drank no wine at dinner."

"I have not used liquor since I . . . since the war," the young man explained.

The hesitation had not escaped the keenly observant doctor, and again he mentally reflected that something *had* happened over there, something not yet revealed, but which without doubt would account for that whitened hair and that deep abstraction. Yes, he had done right in insisting to the senator that "Craggmont" was the proper abode for Alden, whatever the sacrifice to the Chaddocks. For there he could be watched, probed, studied. . .

"Come to my office in the morning," he volunteered, after again gazing long at the scarred temple. "I want to examine that wound. It was badly handled. Was there any contusion? Do you have headaches? You probably will. Yes, you are certain to."

And then, very deftly, Alden was permitted to retire to his own suite, for the day had been a trying one. But in the familiar precincts of his former chambers he sat long and wondered if he had asked to be permitted to retire. And in the library below the doctor and the senator smoked many cigars and discussed affairs of public and mutual interest.

CHAPTER 7

WHEN Alden awoke, the tardy sun lay still below the horizon. He awoke with a start, with a feeling of oppression, as if his throat were in the clutch of human hands. Then, sensing his familiar environment, he rose.

He did not ring for a valet: the thought of it was repellent. The thought of any human support—excepting as Marian's might be so regarded—was become distasteful. He prepared his own bath, and dressed unaided. He had never done so before in "Craggmont". Nor did he put on his uniform. There was a feeling that he had not earned the right to wear it. In the wardrobes and presses he discovered his former clothes just as he had left them. He selected a modest suit of gray tone and laid his uniform carefully away.

As he made his preparations for the day, the doctor's widely discursive conversation of the preceding night kept recurring to him, and because of its insistence he sought to analyze it.

He was dealing, not with Doctor Roake, but with the thought that had flowed through him as a channel—nay, rather, with the thought which the doctor appeared to reflect. But his endeavors to interpret it brought only mental confusion, though it left a conviction of further material desolation.

Yet he did not fear. In the fires that had swept him into the vestibule of death his former torturing sense of fear had consumed. In the faint glimpse vouchsafed him of the unreality of human concepts, he felt strength; in his untried knowledge of the world as one of sensuous impressions mistakenly accepted for facts, he found confidence. But he paused often while dressing to muse on the hour of judgment, of testing, that he well knew must come. Yet that the Christ would follow in its wake, he doubted not.

He breakfasted alone. The senator was asleep; Harris had spent the night away. Jedkins served him, silently, but with many questioning glances and awed stares. And now and then the door of the serving room creaked slightly as the other servants peered curiously in at the white-haired figure.

It was early, an unwonted hour for a Cragg to be stirring. And as Alden went from the breakfast room into the empty library a great sense of loneliness smote him. It drove him from his chair before the fire, and he passed into the living room, thence across the wide hall to the great salon. Their vast emptiness had never touched him before. Tears rushed to his eyes. These great halls, echoing with vacuity, typified the barrenness of the life he had once led—typified the emptiness of the judgment which he had once pronounced on the only one who had ever really known him, really loved him, and would have saved him. And in his human loneliness his famished affections called to her, called aloud: "Marian! My Miriam! I want you! I want you!"

He turned and, with bowed head, wandered slowly back to the library to his chair before the fire. A heavy oppression seemed to brood upon the air. The low, sweet notes of the chimes from the great clock in the hall broke upon the stillness. He listened. Their soft, sad melody floated through the rooms and died away like old memories. His head dropped into his hands, and he shook with sobs. But even the Master had wept at the tomb of dead hopes. . .

A servant appeared and startled him. "Beg pardon, sir, but there's a woman in the hall. She asked for the young man of the house. I . . . I presume she means you, sir. The lodge-keeper brought her up. She insisted on coming in, sir, although it is just eight o'clock. . ."

Alden looked up. "She probably wishes to see Dr. Harris

Chaddock," he said. "He spent the night out, I presume at his club. You may tell her."

"I did, sir." The servant hesitated. "I . . . I think, sir, you had better speak to her, if convenient."

The servant's manner impressed him and he rose. "Very well," he said quietly. "You may retire."

As he entered the hall a young woman got up quickly from a settle and came toward him. But she stopped short after a few steps and uttered an exclamation. "You . . . you are not the one!" she stammered confusedly. "I want to see Harry Chaddock!"

"He is not here," said Alden.

"Not here?" she flared out. "He is! You lie! They lied to me over the 'phone! Go back and tell him Fay Meuse is here . . . and if he won't come to her, she'll go to him! Get that?"

Alden drew back a pace before the outburst. "But," he repeated, "he is not here. I have told you the truth. He spent last night away. I don't know where."

She glared up at him fiercely. Her broad picture-hat was askew and her bleached hair was loosening. "Don't know where, eh?" she derided. "He's not at his club—or else they lied to me too! Humph! Let me telephone to the rectory, I'll soon find him!"

Alden stood rigid. She came closer, stooping a bit as she came. "Are you his secretary?" she demanded.

"No," he answered, "I am . . . a friend."

She burst into a mocking laugh. "A *friend*, eh? *So* convenient for him to have his friends meet me early in the morning, 'cause I might have gotten up cross. Humph! Stand aside, do you hear? I'm going to call up the rectory! Go, tell him I've taken your word for it that he spent the night out! . . ."

He thrust out his long arms and seized her shoulders. She stood open-mouthed in his grasp. "Explain what you mean," he demanded in a low tone.

Her astonishment gave way before her swiftly returning anger and she spat venomously up into his face. "He's probably there for early mass . . . damn you!" she gulped.

His arms dropped, and she fell away from him and stood cringing, angry and panting. She was not a handsome creature, yet through the enamel on her face there were visible traces of former comeliness. She was richly dressed, heavily bejeweled, and robed in furs. Alden noted not these details. He was suddenly thrust back into that strange hour spent in the rectory yesterday; he was revolving Ethel's wild conduct, her unaccountable moods. . .

Suddenly he raised his head. "Come into the library," he said, "and telephone to the rectory."

She shrank back, gaping. Then she tossed her head and laughed. "Oh, well, if he ain't here I'll just wait till he comes," she flung back defiantly. "I'll live here some day, anyway, so might as well get acquainted with the place now. Is the old man home? Tell him to come down and meet me." She moved unsteadily backward to the settle, where she sank down and sat with bowed head and hands pressed to her temples.

After some moments she looked up at Alden, standing where she had left him, tense and silent. "You said you were a friend of his." Her tone was milder. "Have you any influence with him? What's your name?"

"I am Alden Cragg," he answered her.

She started up. "My God! . . . he's dead! You . . ." She sat down again. Her eyes were big and staring. She had not learned of his strange return. "I never saw him," she murmured, "but I read all about that party he gave the last night he was here. . . You may be . . . You look like a ghost! . . ."

For some moments they steadily held each other's gaze. Each seemed to be searching the other's thought. "I moved here just before Cragg went to war," she suddenly resumed. "They said he was to marry Ethel Whittier."

"I am to marry her."

She sprang up. "Oh, my God! Then that settles everything! How soon will you marry her?" She came forward eagerly.

"Within a few days. Why do you ask?"

"God! You'd better hurry. . . I'm going now," she cried wildly. "I feel all right now. And, for God's sake, Mr. Cragg, don't tell Harry I was here! I am sorry. . ."

She sped to the door and tore it open. For a moment she paused to glance back at the tall, motionless figure. Alden slowly moved toward the door. She darted out, and he closed it after her. Then he went back to the library and dropped into the chair before the fire.

Again the hall clock chimed the passing hour, and yet again. Its tremulous minor pierced his new-born soul; in it he heard afresh the stricken world's hopeless plaint. God, what suffering they draw upon themselves through wilful ignorance of Thee! Yet this painted creature of the scums was no less Man —nor more—than the deluded youth whom, in her wild fear of loss of Good, she had come that morning seeking. Though society raise its golden lorgnettes upon her in self-righteous horror, yet was she their type, tipping the scales of justice no less—nor more—than they. And Alden Cragg, though once he

would have cast from him in utter loathing the garments which this pariah might have brushed in passing, now caught his breath in sorrow, now felt his bosom heave in yearning pity: it was to such as she that he had been returned.

He regretted now that he had let her go in her great need. But her wild allusions to the rectory had turned his startled thought to Ethel, whose need, he knew, was full as great. And he rose, chiding himself for his delay.

Though the morning was now well advanced, "Craggmont" still lay wrapped in brooding silence. Without, the world was white with snow, glistening in the misty sun. He turned to summon Jedkins for his car; but he paused. Then he went to the coat room. He would walk to the rectory—though he had never done it before.

Away from the dreary emptiness of "Craggmont" and out in the crisp winter air, he faced his duty with rising confidence in his small knowledge of Principle as sufficient for the hour. No need was there to cast about for means to solve his problems, for the key was in these simple words: "That ye love one another. . ."

In the distance he descried the tower of St. Jude's; and his thought reverted to the cracked bell. He would replace it, if they wished. Its portent had been fulfilled. He did not know that already it had been replaced, and that thereby was symbolized his own replacement in their midst. As he drew near the church he saw women entering the parish house. St. Jude's multitudinous social activities now made early demands. These were richly clad in furs, and were handed from their snug limousines by liveried lackeys who symbolized the deep content that warmed the world they served. He heard the careless laughter and gay chatter of these women as they exchanged greetings and hurried out of the bracing cold—and his thought went back again to Tiflis and to Erevan. . .

"It's Alden Cragg!" one exclaimed, catching sight of the figure of hodden-gray.

"Oh!" cried another, her breath coming quicker as she paused to gaze in awed wonder.

"He's *walking!* . . ."

"I don't suppose he has a cent now: the estate had to be put in trust, you know—enemy aliens, and such."

"Probably that's why he was sent home."

"Heavens! girls, see that white hair. He looks like a ghost! . . ."

"Shall we speak to him?"

"They say he isn't Alden Cragg at all, but an impostor! Come on, don't take any chances!" And they drew their robes closer and scurried into the parish house.

Alden turned in at the rectory. He had not heard the comment of these women, but his thought had been busy with them. "If I love them I cannot fail to help them," he had said aloud. And he repeated it as he stood before the rectory door.

Mrs. Whittier fluttered into the library to greet him. "Ethel will be down in a minute. The poor dear doesn't usually get up until noon. Papa is in the parish house, and I'm due there now myself. Several committees meet this morning. My country, but we're busy these days! Won't you be glad to get back into the church work! Well, I'll leave you with Ethel. Cooing doves, you know," laughing and shaking a finger at him. "I don't wonder she's wild about you: you were good-looking before, but now you're positively stunning! The girls will go wild over you! My country, but I'm glad you are back!" she rambled on, fussing with her gloves. "Ethel was headed toward nervous prostration. We thought first it might be Harris Chaddock. She got miffed at him and wouldn't let him see her. He felt terribly—they've always been such friends, you know. But," and she laughed, "the contagion around here helped him out. When he came to the rectory as Health Executive, why, she simply *had* to let him see her. He had to look us all over. . . Said the new Wess law required it. And I really believe it's a good thing, don't you? I feel safer with it. We've all been so lax about the public health. Well, I hear her coming, so I'll leave you. Of course you'll stay for lunch." And she fluttered out.

Ethel hung at the doorway for a moment, looking hard at Alden. She was clad in a loose morning gown, and her eyes were heavy with sleep. She raised her hand and covered a yawn, then came toward him, with dragging steps.

He stood with his gaze riveted upon her, his thought strangely disquiet. Her eyes had the same fevered, unhopeful, waiting look that he had seen there the preceding day. They were jaded eyes, deep-ringed. And her face was colorless. She had faded; her girlhood seemed to have fled, her freshness staled.

"Where's your uniform?" she demanded fretfully. "Have you got some silly notion about wearing it? I want you to wear it all the time. . . Why don't you kiss me? . . ." She shuddered and swayed; he caught her in his arms. "I . . . I'm so sick," she whimpered.

He half led, half carried her to the davenport and sat down beside her. His heart ached with pity. "Ethel!" He spoke in a low voice and gently. "Ethel, what is it? Don't you see? I have come back to . . . you."

She shivered slightly and seemed to shrink from him. But she remained silent, though the muscles of her face twitched and her lips trembled.

"Ethel," he resumed tenderly, "I know, I know. . ."

She started up with a gasp. Her eyes flashed wildly upon him. "*What* do you know?" she cried hoarsely. "Did he . . ." She clapped her hands over her mouth and fell back, her eyes fastened on him wide with terror.

He laid a restraining hand upon hers, while he sat looking searchingly into her pallid face. Again he was revolving her wild conduct of yesterday; again he was analyzing the meaningful words of Fay Meuse, and Mrs. Whittier's rambling talk before Ethel appeared. A heavy sensation sat at his heart. What was it? What, in the name of Truth, was it?

"Don't look at me that way!" she cried out. "You're accusing me! I haven't done anything! I haven't!"

She was on the verge of hysteria. He saw it, and he quickly put an arm about her. "I only want to help you," he tried to soothe her.

"We are going to be married . . . We are, aren't we? I want to set the day now."

He strove vainly to read a meaning in her rapid, imploring words. "Yes," he answered; "but," hesitatingly, "we had better wait . . ."

"No!" It was almost a scream.

"A few weeks . . . until you are better. . ."

"No! No! *No!*" Her voice rose shrilly. "You said yesterday whenever I wish! I sha'n't wait!"

"But, if I insist—for your sake?" he urged.

She broke into a wail and threw herself face down among the pillows. "Oh, you don't intend to marry me! You never did! I hate you! I *hate* you!" She shook off the hand that he laid upon her shoulder and started up. "I'm going to kill myself!" she cried passionately. "I am going to kill myself!"

He threw an arm about her and held her. He drew her back, sobbing hysterically. "Ethel," he endeavored to calm her, "it shall be as you wish! Just as you wish! I have come back to . . . to you! We will be married to-day, to-morrow, any day you say!"

Tenderly he spoke to her, while he labored to still his own clamorous thought. His compassionate words, voiced low, gradually calmed the tempest in her darkened soul and hushed her wild outcries. The girl was not herself, yet he must know that the daemon that seemed to possess her was not power, nor could wreck her sense of life—nor his. And then, as he talked,

and she became reassured, she found solace and forgetfulness in his planning for their marriage. And he encouraged her, until her own speech became coherent and her thought more normal.

"We do not have problems" . . . so Marian had told him in the gloom of the Temple cistern; "only those have them who do not *understand*." To the all-knowing Mind that is God there can be no problems; and that which He does not know cannot really exist. To the all-seeing "I" there is nothing covered, nothing hid. . .

He talked of Ted Sayor, of the Blacks, the Telluses, the Kerls, of the things in which he knew her interest lay. He spoke of "Craggmont", and she roused to remind him of his promise to give it to her. And always as he talked, he watched her spirits rise and drop, watched the fever in her eyes ebb and flow, listened wonderingly to her laugh that now mounted, high-pitched, hysterical, now fell to a nervous, sobbing whimper.

Then he permitted her to name the day for their marriage, and she eagerly set it just a week ahead. "You might have to go back to war," she offered, averting her eyes from his troubled gaze. "You *will* have to go back soon, won't you?" She looked up at him queerly.

"I may be recalled," he said.

"Why . . . you will *have* to go!" Her tone was insistent. "You are still a soldier. . . And the British are getting whipped, Harris says. . ." She stopped, with a little catch in her breath. Alden looked down quickly and caught her frightened, sidelong glance.

But why should her own reference to Harris Chaddock frighten her? Or did she fear that he, Alden, might be offended by mention of the other? But if she cared for Harris, then surely she need not marry Alden out of sheer duty! Yet one who meets an irksome duty, he reflected heavily, does not do so with such urgency as had been driving her. . .

"What are you thinking of?" she abruptly demanded, sitting up and staring hard at him. "You were thinking bad things of me! I know!"

Her sudden vehemence startled him. He gave her a baffled look; yet he tried to answer her gently. "I was thinking of you . . . yes, and of Harris."

She smothered a cry and fell away from him. He went on absently, as if unmindful of her conduct. "I feel that I should tell you, Ethel, that after we became engaged last spring I knew that you preferred him, and I was glad then that I had beaten him. But now . . ."

"Now you want to get rid of me!" she broke in excitedly. "I know! . . ."

"No, Ethel, not that. But I still feel that deep in your heart you want him. And if that is so, why should you not . . ."

"I can't!" she cried out wildly, discretion and caution now shattered in the outbreak of her passion, "I can't! . . . He can't! . . . He . . ." She covered her face with her hands and sat gasping.

A rush of human sensations swept over him; yet in his intense travail of mind he knew he was standing immovable with Principle—knew that evil must expose itself—knew that error was always a suicide. . .

A question was urging hard upon him, and he gave it voice. "Won't *she* permit him to marry you?"

"Fay Meuse! Then you know!—you *know!*" The girl sprang up and faced him. Hatred and terror filled the chambers of her soul with mad riot. Her eyes flashed fury. Her features were livid. Her slender body shook with released passion. "She said she would kill him! . . . *kill* him! . . . if he married me! . . . And he doesn't dare, he doesn't dare! . . ."

All the pent emotion, the torturing fear, the gnawing horror of hellish weeks of covered error now burst their bonds, and the maddened girl rushed to the brink of insanity and hung tottering over the dark abyss. Alden rose quickly beside her and seized her in his arms. "I'll kill myself! I'll kill myself!" she raved, struggling in his grasp. "Now you won't marry me either! You won't! You knew! . . . He told you! . . . I hate you! . . . hate you! . . . Oh, my God! . . ." The furious storm quenched the light of consciousness, her voice trailed away, and she sank limp in his arms.

A great illumination had burst full upon him, but its light was foul darkness. He stood mute, stunned, staring down at the senseless, broken thing in his arms. His thought was a whirling, spinning chaos. He swayed, caught himself, and froze with the mesmeric horror of it all.

Again, with glazed eyes boring into emptiness, he saw himself a shackled slave in Antonia's tower, and felt the scorpion sting of the deadly lash. Again he sensed the horror of night that fell when Death shrieked over Golgotha. Again he stood with glassy stare fixed upon the leaguer of shadows that lowered over the future. . .

And yet again, as he stood with that dead thing hanging in his fierce grasp, he heard the voice—*that* voice! "That ye love one another . . . one another. . ." The light glowed again behind him! The Christ was coming, treading the waves of error! . . .

His head dropped. His eyes blurred. He sank to his knees. His burden fell to the floor. He bent over it and burst into sobs.

* * * * * *

Well for the world that the Code divine makes null the laws of men! Ethel Whittier opened her eyes and looked up into those of Alden Cragg. She lay on the davenport, where he had placed her, and he was sitting by her side. She started to rise, but he restrained her. And there was something in his manner now, and in his appearance, that she had not seen before, something that held her awed.

How long she had lain thus, she could not surmise; but as consciousness returned and she felt herself slowly emerging from vacuity, she was in some manner impressed with the thought that he had sat by her long, struggling with a monstrous thing that had risen to devour them both, and that he had conquered the awful menace and driven it back into the shadows.

"Lie there and rest," he said, very gently. "Try to compose yourself—and forget. I will help you."

She lay gazing up in wonder at him through her dull, cavernous eyes. Then her fears returned upon her. "I . . . I want to sit up," she whimpered feebly. He took her hand and tenderly helped her to a sitting posture. She huddled among the pillows, weak, exhausted, and stared at him fearfully. He sat with head bent and eyes fixed upon the floor. A terrible calm seemed to possess him. The suspense tortured her and she cried out. "You are going to kill me! I know! You are going to kill Harris! . . ."

He looked up. "No," he said.

"But you are not going to marry me! Oh, I'll kill myself! . . ."

"Stop!" He turned upon her and seized her hand. She shrank back cowering. "Put those evil thoughts away from you! They are deadly! I shall . . . marry you, Ethel, on the day you named."

She gasped. "You . . . don't . . . love me! You are going to marry me to . . . kill me!"

"I love you, Ethel," he answered in a voice of infinite pathos, "as the Master loved the sinful woman. I am marrying you to save you, and to give the protection of my name to . . . your child."

He rose unsteadily. "Please give my excuses to your parents. I . . . I have a . . . full day. I will come again . . . to-morrow." And he left her.

CHAPTER 8

IT had been a moot question among the society mentors of Crestelridge just how far they should go in accepting Alden Cragg after his return, and their hesitation found full justification in the current report—from an untraceable source—that the man was an impostor. But with the public announcement of the day set for his marriage to Ethel Whittier, all reservations were abandoned, and a clamor went up among the rivals for his favor. Mrs. Whittier had joyfully telephoned the tidings to a score of her friends, including the newspapers, within an hour after returning home and learning that the day had been named, coupling it with the statement that Alden might be ordered back to the front any minute. "And Ethel," she informed her friends that afternoon over tea, "is a changed girl! The dear child nearly mourned herself to death while he was away!"

"And yet," reflected Ted Sayor, to whom this statement by the rector's wife was later transmitted by the grinning young Kerl, "her mourning for Alden dates from about September. Before that she mourned if you mentioned him!".

Although everything was "decidedly informal, out of respect to the dead", it was a busy week that society had planned, and Ethel's mourning became now genuine, at least, for her frail health necessitated declining all invitations. "But, Alden, *you* will have to accept!" Mrs. Whittier urged. "The people want a look at you—and I want to show you off! Come, you shall escort me instead of Ethel. My country, but I'm proud of my handsome son!"

And Alden, who had remained in strict seclusion since his arrival in Crestelridge, avoiding the clubs and his former haunts, keeping himself out of the public eye and away from even such close cronies as Ted Sayor, Wallie Black, and Freddy Kerl, went with the ecstatic Mrs. Whittier to an informal evening at the Tellus mansion. And he went in an abstraction, a remoteness of thought, that, with his white hair and pallid features, his low voice, the distant look in his big eyes, caused gasps of wonder and awed speculation, in which the story of his enforced enlistment at the hands of Marian Whittier was completely submerged. But of course Mrs. Whittier and Ethel were social powers now, and Madam On-dit must be discreet. . .

Stares and muffled exclamations followed the spectral figure as it moved among the carefully selected guests at the Tellus

"informal". "Something happened over there," Doctor Roake was convinced. "And"—though he did not voice this audibly —"it had to do with Marian Whittier." And the rector, staring from a distance at the man who, despite his appearance, his name, was *not* Alden Cragg, mentally reflected: "*Something* happened!" But Harris Chaddock lighted cigarette after cigarette, with his eyes glued to Alden, and fretted his brow into a puzzled network.

"Welcome back from the grave, Aldy-boy!" was Ted Sayor's greeting, accompanied by a hearty slap on the back. "How'd you leave heaven? Didn't meet up with Boots, did you? Tell us, when's the row over there going to end?"

Alden held Ted's hand long and looked deep into the laughing eyes. "There will be no end, Ted," he said slowly, "until men change their thinking."

"Hopeless," Ted returned, with a sidelong glance at the rector. "But, privately, the reason I asked was because of the war-time prohibition act. But, anyway," he laughed, "I'm getting the best of Wilson on that: I've taken to oatmeal, sugar, and cream. The combination produces alcohol in the stomach, Roake says. So I'm a walking distillery these days, and the Government can't touch me. Oh, modern science is marvelous, Aldy-boy, marvelous! Only," and he made a wry face, "I don't know when the alcohol is in my stomach, and so, of course, I don't feel its effects in the brain. Horribly disappointing!"

Alden shivered slightly as he listened to Ted's vapid chatter, and his thought turned to Flanders. Was that terrible sacrifice over there being made to the end that this—*this*—might be perpetuated?

He bent his eyes again upon Ted. "What are you doing these days?" he asked.

"Oh, killing time," was the nonchalant answer. "And that too is hopeless, for it's always Time that gets us in the end."

"You were drafted?"

Ted started. For a moment he seemed confused. Then, forcing a laugh: "Wasn't accepted. I'm tubercular—and I guess that's more than theory. My health has been wretched. I'd go away . . . Arizona, or some place . . . but I've got to stay here and watch things. Besides, I'm practicing real economy these days. I've had to measure my bank account. Senator Chaddock has been handling my affairs, and he made a lot of investments that haven't panned out yet. But I . . . I'm sure they will. I'm banking heavily on Primal Motors. . ."

Madeline Nence came running up hand in hand with Freddy Kerl. "My!" exclaimed the girl, planting herself and staring

up at Cragg, "but you . . . you're *wonderful!* Isn't Ethel the lucky girl!"

Alden turned his head quickly, but met the grinning eyes of young Kerl. "Some little hero, boy!" observed the latter under his breath. "You must a got scared white! Did you get that white hair running?"

"Oh, potting Fritzies is scary business," Ted explained, giving Freddy a nudge.

"And they said you were dead!" chimed Madeline. "Oh, tell us all about it!"

"Yeah, Aldy-boy," Ted urged, "come across with the ghost story. You owe me a five-spot, too, that I paid to a medium. . ."

"That's right!" laughed Madeline; "Ted took us all to a spirit meeting, and he told the medium to put in a call for you—that was after we heard you were dead!"

"When we got your spirit on the wire," Ted enlarged, "it sneezed a few times and said something banal about being happy in heaven, and then quit us cold. I remarked to the medium that the spirits were all deficient in originality and handed her five dollars and went out. You owe me that five for not dying."

"I say," young Kerl put in, still widely grinning, "don't suppose you ran across Otto Hoeffel over there. . ."

"Didn't he put it over us here, though!" exclaimed Madeline disgustedly. "I hope he got shot for it!"

"But you haven't told us about your dying," Ted urged, winking an eye at Madeline. "Which way did you go, up or down? But of course you went to heaven, being a member of St. Jude's in good standing."

"Did you see the Lord?" young Kerl queried with a chuckle.

"And how'd you get back?" Ted persisted. "It's a good thing to know, for I'm thinking we're going to get tired of heaven. Give us a tip, old man, is it like what the rector describes?"

They were barbed shafts, loosed from the the bow of ignorance, that these thoughtless ones were launching. And though they broke harmless against him, yet he knew that the very act of loosing them was retroactive. For one may say *"Raca"*, and suffer only the penalty for the expletive prescribed by the Sanhedrin Council; but these were holding the concept of him as a fool, recking naught of their own loss of spirituality by so doing, heedless of their own denial of God thereby, in that they were regarding His representation, not as the reflection of Principle, but of evil.

Yet did he dare here, now, throw Truth's pearls to the swinish elements of the human mind? "But if I love them, I

cannot fail to help them," he thought. "And I do! I do!" And in the wake of this there surged a flood-tide of zeal—zeal that swept before it the restraints of wisdom that the Master so wisely imposed.

"No, Ted." Alden spoke so seriously that the eyes of his auditors abruptly widened. "Heaven is a state of Mind."

"Hurrah for heaven!" exclaimed young Kerl. "How do you get there? Have to be shot?"

"You reach it by acquiring that Mind which was in Christ Jesus," Alden answered.

"I do declare!" the youth ejaculated, though somewhat taken back.

"And you don't have to die first?" Madeline asked. "Really, I've been thinking a lot about death, and I want to know."

"There is no death, Madeline, but the belief that man dies. That belief is the result of sin. And sin is the belief that there is anything but God and His manifestation."

"But what about Gehenna, where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched?" Ted bantered, suppressing a smile. "Were you there too?"

"Yes," was the quiet answer; "it is the valley of Hinnom, beyond the walls of Jerusalem, where the bodies of criminals used to be exposed after death to the worms and were consumed by fire. The prophet Isaiah used this symbolically to point out that those who opposed God would come in time to Hinnom, punishment and death."

"Yeah," Ted countered in mock seriousness; "but it is used in the New Testament differently."

"Jesus used it, after he had taught that death is a sleep produced by false belief, to show that punishment is not eternal, but lasts only as long as the sin lasts. He taught that men would wake out of the mesmeric sleep of death, in another state of consciousness, and that, if they had been wicked here they would continue their careers of wickedness and misery and suffering there. He taught that hell is the mental state due to one's own evil conduct."

He paused and stood looking at them earnestly. "Oh," he went on, now forgetful of environment and self, "this is what I want you to know: that death here is followed by death there, unless we turn upon the false beliefs of mortal mind and destroy them, and so make the second death, and all the torment of suffering and dying, powerless. It can be done; it *must!* Oh, the frivolous things that occupy your thought now are but mesmerism, holding you to certain suffering and death! Wake, I beg of you, wake! I have come back to rouse you out of your mesmeric sleep of death in matter!"

His voice had risen, and others, attracted by its sound, came gathering curiously about him. "What's the fool saying?" muttered Harris Chaddock. "Careful!" said Ted in mock admonition. "Don't call him a fool: you're in danger of hell fire!"

"Well, well!" blustered the rector, coming up, arm in arm with Doctor Roake. "Is Alden giving you some of his thrilling war experiences?"

"No," laughed Ted; "he's giving us hell!"

"Tut, tut! But I don't wonder, for the distressing sights he has witnessed have naturally made him serious. He's going to tell us something about them. I've arranged to have him address the congregation of St. Jude's."

"Oh!" "Ah!" "Great!" came the expressions of a varied sentiment.

"May I be there!" murmured Ted, his eyes widening.

Alden's head dropped, and he stood gazing at the floor. His zeal had gone forth without wisdom; the pearls lay trampled. He thought of Marian, of her futile efforts to rouse him, and of his bitter punishment for rejecting her. Must these, over whom he now yearned, suffer as had he?

Doctor Roake took his arm and led him aside. "You haven't been to see me yet," he gently rebuked him. "I want to examine your wound. . ."

"It is unnecessary," Alden interrupted.

"Don't say that," the doctor urged seriously. "You are manifesting its effects in ways that you don't recognize. Don't be foolish, Alden. We don't want you to develop brain trouble. Come to see me to-morrow, sure."

"No, Doctor, I do not wish to have your thought on it."

The doctor threw him a look of astonishment. *That* sounded like Marian! Something *had* happened, with which that girl was much concerned. Fortunately he had ways of finding out. But all in good time. . .

The Tellus informal was but one of several that diverted the jaded minds of Crestelridge that week and helped to while away the tedious interval that the world was devoting to the silly business of war. "Heavens!" they declared, as they sipped their chocolate and nibbled their denatured wafers, "war-bread! Sugar rations! It's disgusting! Even if we have the money, they won't let us buy what we want! And they call this a *free* country!"

"You're *quite* right! But, to change the subject, what do you think of young Cragg's preaching to us the other night? Still, they say that the horrible things the soldiers see over there make them religious."

"Harris Chaddock says he's mentally unbalanced, due to his wound."

"I wouldn't be surprised. And yet Ethel Whittier insists on marrying him! And to think that she might have had Harris! My Lord! But he's handsome—no denying that. But . . . I don't . . . know."

Then, while a disturbed society gawked and gossiped, while it whispered and predicted and laid down laws, Ethel Whittier became Mrs. Alden Cragg, with the minimum of service, sentiment, or show.

Owing to the girl's continued ill health, the ceremony, which neither she nor Alden would consent to delay, was performed in the rectory library, and in the presence of only the relatives, the Chaddocks, Telluses, Blacks, and Kerls. And, of course, Doctor Roake. Mrs. Whittier had lamented long and loudly the denial of her dearest wish, a church wedding, with all its attendant ostentation. "Oh, my country!" she wailed, even while decking herself for the cerēmony, "why did the child's health fail just now, of all times! But," gulping down her grief, "we'll celebrate her anniversaries in Penberry Hall some day, that we will!"

From the night of the Tellus informal Alden had appeared more reticent, abstracted, absorbed. He had kept to his apartments in "Craggmont", when the demands of Mrs. Whittier had not required his presence at the rectory or an "evening", and the light had glowed from his windows many a night till the morning sun rose to dispute it. He had seen little of the Chaddocks—Harris had now taken permanent lodgings at his club—and his meals were usually served him alone. The senator had bidden him bring his bride to "Craggmont", but had lifted his shaggy brows in surprise when Alden had requested that a separate suite be prepared for her. "Egad!" he ejaculated, "doesn't the fool intend to . . . to *room* with her?" But he gave orders, nevertheless, that the suite vacated by Harris be forthwith prepared for Mrs. Alden Cragg.

Daily that week Alden had walked to the rectory to see Ethel. Once he encountered Harris Chaddock there. For Ethel had angrily refused to permit any other physician to attend her, and her helpless parents had bowed to her will. But she had improved perceptibly since that black hour when error had dragged her into the shadows as Truth forced it to expose itself. Yet of that hour and its dark revelation, neither had since spoken. Alden's attitude toward the girl was one of unvaried tenderness. He talked of the light, of the summer of life and its flowers, with no allusion to its winters and frozen hopes. And she huddled before him, now regarding

him curiously, now frowning, sullen, querulous and tearful, now cynical, flippant, sarcastic, and drawing a dubious pleasure from her ridicule of all that she knew he loved.

But he had fought his battle and won. In the long night hours of that black winter week he had faced the shafts of malicious suggestion, gathered them to his bosom, and crushed them against the breastplate of his highest concept of Principle. But for the sacrifice which he was making, he knew that Ethel would destroy herself, body and soul. He knew that the craven spirit of Harris Chaddock cringed in terror before the threats of Fay Meuse, and that Ethel's mesmeric infatuation for her cowardly betrayer was such that she would herself seek death rather than endanger his life by insisting that he make her his wife. It was a hideous past, a revolting present, a menacing future that involved him, but it was of his own making. Yet he was paying the debts, not of his present self, but of the creature he had once thought himself to be. . .

In those still, dark hours of wrestling his thought had been much with Marian, despite his struggles to keep it from her. He had left her to come back and face *this!* Would he have come, had he known? Yes—for Marian would have sent him. She had called him, saved him—he was *hers!* Ah, yes; but *she* was the Christ's. And the Christ came not to the righteous, but to such as Ethel. So Marian had sent him back to this lost sheep of the House of Israel.

Then he should not lament, should not so greatly sorrow. True; but, though he had been recalled, *his recall was to the human sense of life.* It was Marian—not he himself—who had demonstrated the impotence of error to hold him. He was still human, with such demonstration as hers yet to make. He had progressed, immeasurably, because of her work, but man he remained, not Man as yet. And when in his responses to the rector his dry lips shaped the words: "I will," not even the Master would have rebuked the plea that still lingered: "Let this cup pass from me . . . let it pass, O my God . . . let it pass. . ."

CHAPTER 9

THE records of ecclesiastical autocracy fill the darkest pages of human writ. In the guise of the Christ, Satan conquered a world. The Dark Ages of theological tyranny fused slowly into those of civil autocracy. Error had but changed its form. The insanity of Nebuchadnezzar filled Church

and State; pious thaumaturgy changed wafers and wine into human flesh and blood, while sins were remitted to the clink of coin and eternal salvation was bargained for cash; then the lingering incarnation of mediævalism, the German War-Lord, Defender of Islam, strutted the boards with clanking sword amid the timid plaudits of a mesmerized world, and sank into the flames of his own conjuring. Yet error died not: it but laid down its mask for one more seductive, and in the guise of scientific paternalism still continues its wanton destruction of the sons of men.

Ted Sayor laughed often and hollowly these days at the fears that he could not shake off. And often, as he drew the blankets over him at night, he wondered if the Dark Ages of medical tyranny into which he had unwittingly drifted—into which the world seemed now to be drifting—would not prove blacker than those of Canossa and Whitfield. The spiritual plea of the crafty mediæval churchman who went forth to save souls at the cost of human liberty appeared to him no more specious than that of the political doctor, who, with the same goal, was inducing soporiferousness now by the waving of his banner inscribed with a plea for the preservation of public health.

And often as he lay shivering with the chill of fear, Ted would speculate on the mystery of life and causation. "Why," he would reflect aloud, "the chemists tell us that the human body is composed of 85 per cent water and 15 per cent ordinary salts! How in heaven's name can it think and act and enjoy and suffer? It can't! These things are done *for* it! Yet the doctors treat it as if matter possessed life and intelligence, and as if drugs could think and act independently! For thousands of years they have tinkered with the body and its diseases, both effects, without ever discovering the cause! They can't tell us why the body becomes diseased! And why should it? Why, in God's name . . . But there is no God, for no omnipotent creator would stoop to make a thing so frail, so absolutely imperfect, so miserably weak and poor as the human body and its animating genius, the human mind!"

And then he would wonder if, after all, Marian Whittier had not grasped something vital, something that might have wrought his own salvation, but that he had spurned. And he wondered now why he had spurned it. And yet he would spurn it again, were she to urge it upon him afresh, he knew. But . . . why?

And how had he so suddenly become enmeshed? It was as if he had walked into a trap with his eyes wide! The very thing that he had defied and ridiculed had now seized him,

silenced him. It had . . . he shuddered to think what worse thing it had done to him!

He must do something! It was a resolution that was now formed nightly anew. In the smoldering fires of retrospection —for there was as yet no blaze—he had begun to feel vagrant doubts of a life of complete pleasure. It was possible that his sense of values had been—or become—awry. He should leave Crestelridge: his health had become a warning and a demand. He would so advise Doctor Roake, then consult with Senator Chaddock. . .

Alas! he was still paying the usorious price of immunity from army service, and he dared not leave the doctor's side. Moreover, his affairs were strangely in a state of confusion. . . Odd that he had not known it until the senator began to delve into them! Of course it was the war. . . Securities had so depreciated. . . He must wait. . .

But a curse upon a war that could effect such a complete *bouleversement* of the human mind! There must be rare elements involved in it of which he could not have dreamed. Had it not touched the proud Craggs with a withering blight? And he laughed as he thought of Alden at the Tellus informal. "He *preached* to us, the fool! Came with a long face and a mouth full of Bible verses!" But he reflected that it was not the mere fact of the preaching that had nettled him so deeply, but, rather, its very unorthodox note. It was like Marian's, a challenge to the human mind to a step in the dark. And because of its deadly fear of an untried step, the human mind has sent thousands to torture and oblivion. For a like challenge it crucified Jesus.

Still there was nothing to do but wait. And Ted was waiting, stupefied by the belief that he must wait, yet with never so great a need to rouse, to awake, to throw off the tentacles of the deadly mesmeric thing that had clamped upon him.

But while some, like Ted, sat waiting, others had long been busily minting the violent world-disturbance into coin of varying worth. The activities of Doctor Roake had by now increased in geometrical progression of a rarely high ratio. The launching of his benevolent religio-medical plan had first astounded the professional world, aroused some jealous opposition, then evoked a general and vigorous coöperation, largely for its very audacity. The doctor's portrait had been no stranger to newspaper columns, but now it appeared large on front pages, and with encomiums and explanations profuse and detailed. He had long been extolled for his professional skill; he had now, at a bound, become the medical Moses who would lead his people into possession of the coveted domination. *"A Hundred*

Million People Awaiting Him!" was the blaring headline of a metropolitan sheet; and the sentiment was echoed from the western Sierras. *"A Practical Plan of World-salvation!"* cried exultant others. *"A Sound Body Housing a Sound Mind"* and *"Medicine's Helping Hand to Religion"* suddenly became household phrases. For thus did organized medicine, aware of its own human strength and weakness, magnanimously essay to lift struggling Christianity to its feet, assuming temporary leadership while yielding to the latter's spiritualizing alchemy that must in due season bring in the millennium.

The effect of his carefully prepared announcement upon the people was in the highest sense gratifying to the doctor, particularly as observed in the Philistine Ted Sayor. The latter experienced a rare sense of exhilaration as he absorbed the plan. He eagerly compared it with theology as typified by the Reverend Wilson Whittier; he measured it with the radical concept of Christianity as exemplified by Marian Whittier; and he sighed— it was a gasping sigh of relief. "Perhaps, after all, that's it," he murmured, poring over the plan. "Marian is too spiritual; Whittier, too material. This scheme opens the intermediate. It's rational. It's . . . it's sane." And Ted, like the world, yielded to the hypnosis, with a smile of content, and continued to wait.

It became almost immediately necessary for the doctor to expand his offices, and eventually to occupy an entire floor of the building housing him. His large practice was soon and of necessity delegated to assistants. He had ceased to be the physician, and had become the master-director of a world-movement. From his fertile mind, now flowering full, came plan after plan as auxiliaries to the main theme. The organization of the physicians went on apace. Opposition from leaders of the national medical associations was, of course, to be expected, and they continued to hold out; but the state and local associations yielded almost immediately to the unique scheme, particularly when it was explained to them that they were but exchanging a minimum of prestige for a maximum of power. Under the plan community nurses and visiting nurses of various types were to be grouped and sent into the waiting field; the health offices were to be speedily reformed and their functions extended; candidates for legislative offices were to be summoned before the medical inquisition before election—not stated so baldly as this, of course, yet indubitably hinted—and health bills, numerous and of wide latitude, were proposed and discussed, with a view to urging them upon the legislative bodies of state and nation. . .

Only a master mind, planning long and carefully through

many years, could have proposed such a daring scheme and launched it with such éclat. Only a scheme so perfect in its ministrations to the public weal could have found such ready and general acceptance.

Yet the rector, oddly enough, viewed the initial success of the unique Roake plan with a singular lack of enthusiasm. "And I don't know why I feel so little emotion," he mused, "for it is precisely what I have long desired. I don't know. . . Nothing seems just right these days. . . Alden's return. . . Ethel's marriage. . . And Doctor Roake: I find myself wondering if he is wholly trustworthy—as regards efficiency, of course, for the ethical import of his plan cannot be questioned, I am sure. . ."

Perhaps he viewed with disquiet the numerous priests and preachers who now visited the doctor for adjustment, not of bones or disarranged organs, but of their conflicting theological tenets in this vast humanitarian plan. Perhaps he was a bit impatient that his own rôle was as yet but dimly outlined. The doctor had said that he, Wilson Whittier, should lead the theologians. But, though he now spent much time shifting from one foot to the other in the doctor's humming establishment, still there had appeared as yet no definite place for him, no certain duties, no real authority. "But it will come, of course," he consoled himself. "The material business must precede the spiritual, and I . . . I must . . . wait."

Daily Senator Chaddock came to the establishment to labor under the doctor's watchful eyes, and often he would expostulate: "I shouldn't be here, I really shouldn't, Roake! I've work to do elsewhere; but I . . . I can't seem to keep away, I can't! Egad! I can't!"

"Why, I couldn't get along without you, Chaddock!" the doctor would cordially respond. And he would wave the senator to his accustomed easy chair and place before him the rare cigars, and then talk in his low, melodious voice that invariably set the senator's head to nodding and eventually left him contentedly somnolent.

It had occurred to the senator of late—though he would not incur the humiliation of voicing it—that with his invaluable aid in securing the passage of the Wess bill his services to the doctor had been concluded, for since his marriage to Mrs. Cragg no further legislative business had been delegated to him. Nor was this due to any diminution of such business, as it had rather increased in volume. And he wondered if perhaps it was because of his growing tendency to become confused, his inability to concentrate as of yore. He did wander frightfully, he knew. It worried him. And he fell asleep on

any occasion. This alarmed him greatly, particularly as the doctor had shaken his head gravely over it and had felt the necessity to arrange for a definite course of treatment, to which the senator submitted daily. Yet he knew that he still aided the doctor, for he was continually placing his signature to documents of various sorts. . . But he would not divulge the fact that he was not always acquainted with the nature of the papers he was signing, lest even this slight clerical work be denied him. And what mattered it, he argued, as long as he so implicitly trusted the doctor? And trust him he did—nay, admired him, loved him, with a depth of affection that had at length stimulated a hound-like desire to be always with him, to follow at his heels, to bask—or sleep—in his comforting, protecting presence, under the soothing effluence from those deep, black eyes.

But neither Senator Chaddock nor the rector need have felt slighted in that Doctor Roake did not see fit to take them into his most intimate councils, for these he shared with none. Only here and there did the astute physician drop vagrant hints of the secret working of his thought; and these, far from being casual or fortuitous, apparently were dropped in the manner of experimentation, for their observable effect upon the human mind. To Doctors Lann and Sale, who could not refuse to enter the organization, he made the suggestion most appropriate to their disturbed thought. "My plan of organizing the physicians," he succinctly explained to them, "is in the nature of unionization, which is quite as necessary for our material welfare as for that of the day laborer. While the war appears to be exercising a leveling process, nevertheless well-defined classes are arising, of which the medical profession constitutes a most prominent group. These classes will not ignore money and its relative value. Therefore we cannot." And Sale and Lann, who had families to support, felt the force of the doctor's pronouncement, though much to the recalcitrant Doctor Benson's disgust.

To the less impecunious and more aggressively independent physicians he stressed the fact that the medical profession as yet had no part in the councils of our Government, although public health was of vastly greater consideration than possible invasion by the Hun. "Disease is more deadly than mere dis-ease," he reminded them. "It is the germ that really renders the German, or anyone else, dangerous. In recognition of the brotherhood of man we must act where Congress and the President lack the vision to do so. It means political power for you—not, of course, that you desire it, but that you can not shirk it if it devolves upon you who are eminently fitted

to assume it and who will exercise it solely for the public weal."

To the priests and preachers he emphasized the ease with which "drives" for funds would in future be conducted. "It is the physician who now becomes the missionary," he pointed out. "Do not forget that formerly the priest and the doctor were one. It is the medical missionary who will evangelize the world. And the vast sums necessary for this work will be raised quite easily by our organization." And Kerl, who heard the address, jocosely added: "The Bible in one hand and a box of my Liver Pills in the other, gentlemen, for no savage can be pious with a system full of bile."

The rector, as he listened, applauded—but perfunctorily. He was now profoundly disturbed; yet he could not say that it was because of the densely materialistic foundation upon which he knew an equally material structure was to be raised. "The doctor ignores our spiritual needs—but of course the material must always precede. The spiritual will grow out of that. The doctor's statements are necessarily very materialistic. And yet . . . I find myself even more impressed by the manner in which he makes his statements than by the statements themselves. Whatever he says comes as positive assertion. He sticks his statements into our minds and then drives them home as if they were so many nails! He . . . he seems to thoroughly understand the receptivity of the human mind."

But why cavil at method, so that results be obtained? Thus reasoned not a few of the doctors themselves. And the sentiment would have found wide approbation among the laity, had the latter given the matter more than a passing thought. But, "We shall all live to be a thousand years old now!" exclaimed Mrs. Tellus—which was not a little inconsistent, in view of her asserted belief in the delights of an orthodox heaven to which she longed to escape from the woes of the flesh.

"But—all joking aside—" Mrs. Whittier gravely asserted, "I do believe that the doctors, under this organization and unhampered as they will be now, will make us live to be more than a hundred, don't you?" Yet even this was not an unalloyed desideratum, she reflected, for if they should prolong Simeon Penberry's years! . . .

"This will put an end to the mental-science fads," Mrs. Kerl ventured; "Christian healing, and all that stuff."

"If the Lord hadn't intended us to use medicine, why did He give it to us?" was Mrs. Black's definitive manner of settling the moot question of spiritual healing.

"Of course," agreed Mrs. Nence. "And yet, I often wonder why He lets us get sick. . ."

"To try us, naturally," Mrs. Kerl asserted conclusively; "and to punish us."

"But," Mrs. Nence persisted, "if He intended that we should get sick He shouldn't have given us medicine, or if He intended that we should get well He should have given us medicine that would cure. Or . . . Oh, I don't know. Anyway, there's something wrong somewhere, I believe. What do you say, Mrs. Whittier?"

"My country!" exclaimed the rector's wife in a vehement protest of helplessness, "don't ask *me* such questions as that!"

"We shouldn't think about such things," Mrs. Kerl admonished. "We'll be a lot happier if we don't. We can't find out anything about them anyway."

"Leave those things to the doctors and preachers," sagely advised Mrs. Black. "Oh, by the way, Mrs. Whittier, what did Alden give Ethel for a wedding gift?"

" 'Craggmont'," Mrs. Whittier answered promptly. And she sat back to enjoy the envious sighs of her auditors.

CHAPTER 10

THERE had been no wedding journey for Ethel and Alden: Dr. Harris Chaddock had pronounced quite decidedly against it. "But you can go on your honeymoon in the spring, darlings," Mrs. Whittier chirped. "I'll go with you to Atlantic City for the summer. My country! if this silly war would only end we'd all go to Europe to see the ruins."

Alden had been deeply grateful that because of Ethel's health the sardonic celebration of his clouded nuptials could not be extended beyond the elaborate wedding breakfast at the rectory, the reassembling of the few guests at "Craggmont" in the afternoon for entertainment by professional vaudeville talent, and the sumptuous dinner at seven, arranged by the senator and financed by the Cragg estate. And when the guests had at length departed, laughing, joking, and some slightly befuddled by the rare wines which the elder Cragg had brought, many years before, from the Old World, Alden silently led his bride to her suite and handed her to her maid. And the latter wondered greatly as she watched him walk away with bent shoulders and bowed head. And her wonder grew when she looked into the scornful face of the new wife.

It was Ethel herself who had insisted on living apart from him, though beneath a common roof. And, though this was what Alden would have chosen, yet he knew that not by exclud-

ing her from his life could he save her. And the envisioned drift into a life of hypocrisy was abhorrent to one who, like himself, had returned to witness to Truth. Yet it was the intermediate that he must now seek, that he must strive to know would open to him because of the singleness of his desire for the right, for the demonstration here of Principle, Love. His conduct toward Ethel must not be a constant reminder of her sin, else thereby would he assert error's reality and power and fasten it the more irremovably upon her. His attitude could not be that of Pharisaical superiority, for, alas! he too had once stoned the Christ. He loved this girl as he now loved the beggar at his gates. His God had brought him back to care for her who had thrust herself outside of Principle; he alone of all mortals could serve as the channel of Principle to the meeting of her desperate need. And he loved her because he first loved his God.

But he had not thought to meet such tangled problems as confronted him now. And even thus early the tempter of aggressive suggestion oft bade him flee it all. But he knew now through bitter tutelage that men's problems are not solved by flight, but by knowing that Man has no problems in the realm of Principle. And into that realm he would walk and lead this girl. This was his work. And he closed his mind's portals against thoughts of Marian and bent to his task.

With marvelous rapidity Ethel now rebounded and regained health and her spirit of yore. Her hysteria ceased, and the hunted look left her features, the fright left her eyes. She took on weight, and the color returned to her cheeks. "My country!" her delighted mother ejaculated, "if I thought it would have the same effect on me I'd get rid of Papa and marry again!"

With the quick return of health came the return of Ethel's aggressive devotion to self. From the shelter of Alden's name she looked out upon the world and saw that it was still good. To obliterate the nightmare of the past weeks she now plunged deep into social pleasures, and within a month after her marriage she had made "Craggmont" the locus of such social riot as caused even the Whigs of Crestelridge to gasp. "Egad!" quoth the senator, "she's wonderful! Why didn't Harris marry her when he had the chance? But he may yet . . . he may yet!" and, as was of late become his wont, his voice dwindled away in a confused mumble, while his thought turned upon the restriction of Alden's pecuniary allowance. And Harris, his son, taking new courage under Cragg's protection, neglected his club to sit with Ethel before the library fire, promote her social adventures, or take her driving when night rendered unlikely their detection by Fay Meuse.

In Ethel's social activities Alden could take small part; the

rejection of his message at the Tellus informal had driven him back into himself, and generally while the great rooms below rang with the boisterous mirth of Ethel's satellites—and none so loud or so devoted as Harris—Alden sat alone in his apartment above, pondering the climacteric experience that had been his in Palestine, and striving to clear his thought of the cumbering materialism with which physical sense would burden it high. He knew that he was the object of ever bolder witticisms from these who mocked Truth; he knew that to voice to them his experience with death would result in the cry: "He hath a devil!" He knew that Harris Chaddock . . .

Ah, it was in his enforced association with this man that Alden now found his severest trial. Yet through the code of man that cries death to the betrayer Alden drew the negatory line. Not by death is man saved—had he not abundantly proved it?—but by Life. And this one was already dead, dead, dead. . . And Alden would raise him, even as he would Ethel.

But it was the living lie, the purposeful covering of evil, the mockery of his great sacrifice that rendered Alden's present sense of existence so well nigh intolerable. He had given this girl his life: she had trampled it into the dust and turned to rend him. In her certain security she now boldly flaunted Harris Chaddock before him; and the latter, well aware of his immunity, lifted his eyebrows cynically, shrugged his shoulders, and coolly blew his cigarette smoke up into Alden's face.

"But if I love them I cannot fail to help them," was the insistent animus of this nascent disciple of the Christ. And it was no meek and timid turning of the other cheek that he purposed, but a righteous resolve not to meet error with its own fragile material weapons, but with that which the truly wise have demonstrated can alone destroy it, Truth.

Yet in his pure zeal did he rather turn his mental gaze from evil in the mistaken belief that recognition of it, even as such, might thereby render it too real to his consciousness for his as yet untried spiritual strength to conquer. And because of his turning from it, because of his failure at once boldly to face it as error and down it with Truth, did he unwittingly permit it to wax the more noxious.

It early became aggressive in Ethel's demand that Alden fulfill the promise made at their betrothal and deed "Craggmont" to her. He had been stimulated thereby to request of the senator more detailed information regarding the Cragg estate, but had come away from his investigation more deeply perplexed. He had then endeavored to convince Ethel that the time was not propitious. He cited the still-remembered charges

against the Cragg loyalty, the ill-judged investments, the restricted returns from depressed stocks. "Bah!" she derided, "the estate is all right. Harris said so!" And the girl's incautious remark left him more deeply troubled, disquiet.

It was after Alden had appealed to the incoherent senator that Doctor Roake sent for him, "on matters of business". Alden went, wondering. And as he entered the humming establishment where hundreds of clerks and assistants of all grades were now feverishly driving the ponderous religio-medical machine in the name of the public weal, he halted, as if struck by an alien blast, and stood regarding the odd scene in wide-eyed amaze. And his thought went back to days long gone, when the Nazarene healed by knowing God. . .

"How are you spending your time?" the doctor queried, when Alden had been conducted into the luxurious sanctum, into which none might enter but on missions of the highest importance.

Alden smiled wanly. "I have been trying to get acquainted with my affairs," he replied. "They seem quite confused. I I am on my way to consult Cress and Hail."

The doctor started slightly; but the emotion quickly passed. "They are excellent lawyers," he replied, nodding. "But," he went on, "from what little I have gathered regarding the Cragg estate I don't believe anything can be done at present."

"But at least I feel that I should look into my affairs," Alden mildly protested.

"Oh, of course, of course. And yet, I am sure you would not understand them. You know, Alden, your mother brought you up in the good old English notion that the sons of the rich are above sordid business matters. So your knowledge of business to-day is *nil*."

Alden sighed. "True," he agreed; "and that is why I intend to engage these lawyers to go into my affairs for me."

The doctor studied him for some moments. Then: "Have you funds with which to pay these lawyers?" he asked.

Alden threw him a glance of surprise. "Why, no," he returned hesitatingly; "they will be paid out of the estate."

The doctor smiled tolerantly and shook his head. "The estate is tied up," he said. "You could not touch it—nor could your lawyers—without an order from the Courts. And, because of the Enemy Alien Act, the Courts would keep their hands off."

"But," Alden urged, "I am living off the estate now!"

Again the doctor slowly shook his head. "No," he answered, "you are really living off Senator Chaddock's bounty."

"Senator . . . Chaddock's . . . bounty!" gasped Alden, springing to his feet. "And . . . who owns . . . 'Craggmont'?"

"That is yet to be determined," was the doctor's calmly judicial reply. "But it does *not* belong to you. And I think you should know that your monetary allowance is being charged against whatever portion of the estate the Courts may see fit eventually to return to you. I tell you this because Ethel is pretty extravagant these days, and, though the senator has given you permission to draw *carte blanche,* he would tell you, if he had the heart, that it can't continue much longer."

Alden fell into his chair open-mouthed. "I . . . I must leave 'Craggmont' at once!" he cried.

The doctor's shoulders went up slightly. "You can't ask Ethel to leave 'Craggmont' *now!* What would people say?"

"But . . . what else can I do?"

"I sent for you to-day to answer that very question," the doctor replied in sympathetic tones. "Of course I know that some day Ethel will have a fortune, Penberry's money; but for the present, Alden, to be perfectly candid with you, I think you should seek employment."

Then, very carefully, so as to avoid shock, the doctor outlined to Alden the events which had led to the involving of the Cragg estate, touching tactfully on the indiscretions which had resulted in federal disapproval, and the enforced steps—his mother's marriage and the placing of the estate in trust—which had been deemed necessary for safety. Yet the recital was so composed and worded that the impression made upon Alden was that of utter and irretrievable financial ruin.

For long, empty moments after the doctor had concluded Alden sat staring dully. Then he found reluctant speech. "Has it gone so far as that?" he whispered hoarsely. "You mean to say that I have *nothing?"*

The doctor sighed. "I am sorry, Alden. . ."

"Penniless?"

"Let us not say that, Alden. Listen: I can use you. I will give you a position with me. Everything can be nicely arranged. And you can continue to live in 'Craggmont'."

"But . . . on another's bounty? Impossible!"

"Be reasonable, Alden!" the doctor expostulated. "Let your affairs alone until the war ends; don't stir up society by staging a dramatic departure from 'Craggmont'; come to me; let me induct you into the work here, then start you through the country to help organize the ministers under our plan. I will continue your present allowance as your salary. I will even increase it, and you and Ethel shall remain in 'Craggmont.' What say?"

Alden struggled to his feet and stood staring into space with unseeing eyes. The doctor watched him fixedly. "You see,"

the latter resumed at length, "you will find it impossible to secure employment elsewhere, for you are utterly unfitted for any work. You couldn't support Ethel."

Alden turned slowly to him. "Yet *you* would employ me," he uttered in a tense, unnatural voice. "Why?"

"Because of my regard for you, Alden. . . And because my work here affords Christian people like yourself an outlet to express their love for humanity. You worked with me before, to secure the passage of the Wess bill. . ."

"And now you would have me help you secure the passage of others equally wicked? And you would give me my living for . . . for my *life!*" He drew nearer the doctor, with eyes glowing like coals. "Yes, I gave the Wess bill my support, and I rejoiced with you when it became a law. . . But I was mesmerized! I was asleep, like the world, asleep! And that bill, with my help, became a law of death . . . of *death!* . . . to . . . to . . ." He stopped. His lips were sealed beyond that. He stood rigid; then tears started from his eyes, and he dropped his head into his hands.

The doctor rose quickly and gently took Alden's arm. "There, my boy," he said tenderly, "you are a bit shaken by all you've been through. Go back now and think it over. Then come again to me. Remember, Alden, I am your friend, even as I was your mother's. . ."

Thus did evil loose another shaft from its bow with inerrant aim. Alden staggered from the impact. He reeled dizzily away from the doctor under the cumulative shocks of his mother's death, the dark revelation of Ethel's condition, his clouded marriage, and now his financial ruin. It had all come upon him so swiftly, so continuously, as to keep him constantly benumbed. Error had singled him out for destruction. . .

Yet, if so, then for a reason. He had returned from the vale of death with a message of Life; and error had shown that it would have none of it—had not even permitted him to broach it, beyond his unsuccessful endeavor at the Tellus informal. Ethel had stopped her ears and angrily fled his presence when, on the day after their wedding, he had tried to speak seriously with her. And thereafter she had shunned him, had barred him from her presence. Her combined breakfasts and luncheons were served in her suite and without his annoying presence. Often she lunched late with friends at a city hotel or sweet-shop. Her dinners were taken in "Craggmont", perforce with Alden and the senator, but always with one or more guests of her choosing. And her evenings were consumed in the social gayety for which she was now become famous. Days often passed without a word to Alden. And when, at

the end of the first month of their married life, he sought to expostulate with her over her wild extravagances, she insolently informed him that if he did not care to meet her bills there were others who would. She dared him to thrust her away, knowing well that he would not, although she could not know why. He endured it, for her sake, for Harris', for the sake of the unborn child, and walked in obedience to the admonition: "Occupy till I come."

From his benumbing interview with Doctor Roake Alden moved away as in a dream. Out again in the crisp winter air, he wandered for hours, aimless miles, pondering, revolving, yet always seeking. And always Doctor Roake seemed to stand between him and that which he so eagerly sought.

He roused at length to a recognition of the International Club, as he was passing the building, and he felt an impulsion to seek Ted Sayor. He entered, and found Ted ensconced in a cosy corner of the luxurious lounging room, deep in a popular magazine. "My cough keeps me in," was Ted's greeting. And it was given with an embarrassment that he could not explain. "I've hardly seen you, Aldy-boy," he continued. "I've been up to 'Craggmont' several evenings with the crowd, but you were never in evidence. Old married man now, eh? Heaven's sake, don't stare at me that way!". . . And he went off into a fit of coughing.

"Ted," said Alden, when the latter had recovered, "would you . . . would you let me . . . help you?"

Ted sank back and threw him a curious glance. "Help me? Why? I'm all right—excepting for this barnacle of a cough. Just as soon as spring opens, and I can leave my affairs, I'm going to Arizona and lose it. I'm all right."

Alden started slightly. "Your *affairs!* Is there anything wrong with them, Ted?"

Ted laughed. "All I know is what Senator Chaddock says. He's handling them now. He's put me on a strict financial diet. Doc Roake said if I wanted to work he'd take me on. Good joke, eh? But he has a wonderful scheme, hasn't he? He's going to absolutely dominate the hundred million people of this country. He's a clever boy! He's reaching them through the only possible channels: religion and medicine. The fear of death and hell will make 'em knuckle under, eh?"

"But they needn't fear these things if they only *knew!*"

"Well, theoretically, that may be so; but practically . . ." His voice fell. "I wasn't afraid until this cough got me and Roake said I was tubercular."

"Why did he say that, Ted?"

Ted flushed slightly and dropped his head. "Oh," he

answered with forced levity, "he has my family pedigree. Heredity, you know. But," brightening, "I'll be all right when I get out on the Santa Fé trail."

"You can be all right here, Ted. Will you let me help you?"

"Oh, nonsense, Aldy-boy!" Ted roused up and waved a deprecating hand. "What would you try on me? Religion? You tried that over at Tellus'. Funny how you fellows come back from the trenches simply steeped in religion. It's a psychological phenomenon. Curious! By the way, old man, where's Marian Whittier?"

"I don't know, Ted." Alden's voice seemed to come from afar.

Ted looked off through the high window. "There's a wonderful girl!" he said reflectively. Suddenly he turned to Alden and spoke quickly. "If she had stayed here and married me, I'd be a new man now! But she left me—and the devil got me!"

Alden's eyes widened. "You . . . you wanted to . . . marry her, Ted?"

Ted looked at him steadily for a moment. Then: "Let us not talk about it," he said quietly. "That was a dream that has vanished. But, tell me, what are you up to these days?"

"Helping my fellow men, Ted. But . . . they won't be helped, excepting in the way of their own choosing."

"But what makes you think *you* can do anything for them? You didn't use to be so altruistic, so democratic. Guess war's a leveler, all right."

"Because . . . because . . . I sinned, as they are sinning . . . I fell into evil's power," said Alden slowly, answering Ted's question. "I paid for my sin, as they must. . . But, Ted, I have been permitted to come back to warn them, to help them. . ."

"Permitted to come back from where?"

"From the vestibule of death. Oh, Ted, believe me! . . . believe me!" he pleaded, "I have been sent back to *you!* . . ."

Ted started up and looked about anxiously. He turned and stared fearfully at Alden, and drew back from him. "You . . . you're wandering!" he muttered. "Get onto some other subject; you can't afford to talk about the war! . . . It affects you too strongly! Here!" he called, signalling to a page. "Bring us something cool . . . Ginger ale, Alden?"

Alden left Ted Sayor with Marian's words urging upon him: "Your message must be a *demonstration* of Israel." But, if they would only listen! Yet was he being shown that they would not. And in his sorrow for them he ceased to feel the hurt of his own deep wounds.

He bent his lagging footsteps toward the rectory. He no

longer rode, he walked. And that curious fact was eliciting comment. But, again: "It's the war. He got so accustomed to marching over there," Mrs. Tellus had remarked. "No doubt it's nice to be *able* to walk, but, *personally* . . ." And Mrs. Kerl had observed, with a lifting of the shoulders: "Well, I don't think it looks well. I suppose he's come back with a lot of silly notions about democracy, and everybody being on the same level. It . . . it *cheapens* us!". . .

The rector was in the parish house, in the full sweep of St. Jude's buzzing activities. "Well!" he declared, "seeing you, Alden, reminds me that I haven't as yet arranged for you to address our congregation. Must do so at once! How about Sunday evening, after vespers? Yes, an excellent time. And, Alden," drawing him aside, "I want to advise you somewhat regarding your talk. You know," glancing about furtively, "we have a wide variety of tastes and opinions here. I find that I must shape the preaching of the Word so as . . . er . . . to conform as closely as possible to their . . . ah . . . so as not to give offense, you understand. Particularly in this somewhat critical hour of world-history. So just speak of your experiences. . . Don't dwell on anything . . . er . . . unpleasant, you know. Omit all reference to the . . . er . . . the so-called atrocities. They don't want to hear about the *war,* you understand. . . We all want to forget it as quickly as possible, then we'll have less trouble returning to our normal pre-war basis, you see. Just give them something light and interesting, and as amusing and diverting as possible. Play up the capture of Jerusalem and your part in it, but don't refer to the Anglo-Israel fallacy, and don't speak of the Jewish colonization scheme. Some of our people are like yourself, a bit prejudiced against the Jews. And, Alden, be sure to wear your uniform. We are disappointed that you don't wear it at all."

Alden shivered slightly as he listened. No need to tell him now that the preaching of the Word in this fashionable church had become to Wilson Whittier a business, no longer a mission. Crœsus sat here enthroned before the money-changers whose names were cast in bronze in the foyer.

"I'm so glad you dropped in. Have seen so little of you since your marriage," the rector danced along. "Ethel is looking so well now. She's talking of going to Florida next week. I don't see why you should desert us so soon, but I presume you lovers want to get off by yourselves. She is quite insistent about going. And when the child insists, you know, that ends it." He paused and laughed lightly.

Alden had not learned from Ethel of her purposed trip, but he did not so inform the rector. Instead, he looked deep into

the rector's eyes and voiced a query that had been aroused by the latter's solicitude for the sensitive feelings of his congregation. "The Anglo-Israel idea is distasteful to you, I see," he said slowly. "I wonder why. What do you really know about it?"

"Oh," answered the rector, "only what I have heard others say. Doctor Roake, for instance. . ."

"Doctor Roake? But the Anglo-Israel idea tends to unity between the United States and Great Britain. It tends to unity throughout the world. I wonder . . . I wonder . . ." He did not voice his wonder, but it had just occurred to him that the domination of the world by other than Anglo-Saxon ideals was largely a function of the dismemberment of the British Empire. . .

"But certainly, Alden, you do not distrust Doctor Roake! Think what he has done for your mother and you! Think what he is doing for the world now! By the way, did you notice in the *Courier* this morning the doctor's warning announcement of a case of sleeping sickness? Dear, dear! I trust *that* awful disease is not going to become epidemic here. But Doctor Roake surely can cope with it. . ."

His voice dropped abruptly before the demand that thundered from Alden's lips: "Where is your *GOD?*"

The words fell upon the rector's ears like the crash of a bursting shell, and he involuntarily shrank back, half crouching. "Why, Alden! . . . what a start you gave me! Why, surely we would not ignore the Lord in meeting an epidemic!" He looked up curiously, wonderingly, timidly into the pale face before him. "How strangely you speak and act!" he murmured, drawing away. "Has Doctor Roake examined your wound yet?"

"No, and shall not!"

"Don't be obstinate, Alden," the rector pleaded, glancing about nervously. "Remember that I have a right to be concerned, for I have entrusted my little girl to you. And Doctor Roake thinks your wound may have . . . well, affected your brain."

Alden straightened up quickly, as if galvanized by a shock from the battery of error. A dark vista opened before his mental gaze.

"Ah!" he heard the rector say in a relieved voice. "There are the visitors I was expecting. They have come, Alden, to inspect the latest of our utilitarian features. You can see that St. Jude's institutional activities are becoming felt the country over." And the rector hurried away, leaving Alden standing submerged in his turbulent thought.

CHAPTER 11

THE extraordinary change which had come upon Alden Cragg, as manifested in the way he had met the reverses which had befallen him, remained a baffling mystery to Doctor Roake, and he spent long hours puzzling over it. He knew that Alden had been with Marian Whittier in Palestine; but he was certain that the rector and his family were as yet in ignorance of this. And he had advised Senator Chaddock, who had heard Alden speak of it at dinner that first evening of the youth's return, not to divulge it, lest the discovery of that *something* which had happened over there be prevented. He knew too that Alden had been with David Barach in captivity; but beyond this, nothing. Perhaps he might have learned more, but for the inexplicable hesitation which he had felt in regard to questioning Alden since the latter's return. He would have been still further puzzled had he known that the rector and his family, and all who had spoken with Alden since that event, had felt this same unaccountable reluctance.

He was puzzled, too, by Senator Chaddock's reports concerning the domestic life of Alden and Ethel. "As far as I can make out," the senator had said, "they have nothing to do with each other. Don't even live together. But they were in hurry enough to marry! Egad!"

A thousand surmises flooded the doctor's thought. Some of them were disquieting. Then, to Harris Chaddock, he remarked one day: "Alden says the Wess law has become a law of death to . . . to . . ." He paused and watched for the effect.

And the effect was illuminating. So much so, indeed, that the doctor took occasion shortly thereafter to seek confirmation of certain suspicions then aroused. "The predetermination of sex," he observed quite professionally to Harris, "can be controlled, I believe, by mental suggestion. If the parents—or the family physician—will begin to employ mental suggestion several months before the child is born, I am positive its sex, stature, and even its character, can be controlled and determined. Parents don't need to wonder if their children will be geniuses: they can make them such by pre-natal suggestion. I shall demonstrate this at my earliest opportunity."

Harris, as had been anticipated, manifested a lively interest. "But" he objected, "the practice of mental suggestion is dangerous, is it not? It would be dangerous to an expectant mother?"

"Unless employed by those experienced," the doctor returned. "I have used it extensively in my practice. And," he observed, gazing thoughtfully at his cigar, "with remarkable results. But now I should like very much to experiment with an unborn child. Of course the parents would necessarily have to coöperate with me. Therefore they would needs be close friends and confidants of mine. At present I do not know of any case . . ." He glanced up quickly at Harris. "If you learn of one, please report to me, in the interest of medical science."

The doctor's suspicions were further strengthened that same day by conversation with the rector. "So Ethel goes to Florida next week, to be gone until May or June," he repeated, voicing the information just vouchsafed by the rector. "And Alden remains here? But he is wise. I want him near me. He is experiencing the usual difficulty in becoming reabsorbed by normal life."

"You . . . you think he is . . . normal, don't you?" the rector advanced hesitatingly. "I wonder if I ought to permit him to address us Sunday evening."

"Certainly," the doctor assured him. "It will be a test of his normalcy. Of course you understand that no soldier returning from the horrors of war can be quite normal, as measured by his former life. But he will return to the normal state unless disease, shock, or wounds prevent. In Alden's case we have still to determine what effect the bullet wound in his head has produced. Strictly speaking, he is not *fully* normal. Does he talk with you of his experiences over there as yet?"

The rector shook his head. "He talks to nobody. He is singularly reticent, moody, self-absorbed. We know absolutely nothing of his war experiences. But he has indicated that he will speak of them Sunday evening . . . if you still think I should permit him to address us."

"By all means!" the doctor said heartily. "He is still our Alden. We love him. And for that reason we understand and respect his difficulty in becoming readjusted to the normal. But if he should indicate . . . Ah, well, we shall take care of him. By all means let him speak. I shall be there . . ."

And with Doctor Roake's full approbation, and after fulsome advertisement, Alden Cragg stood in the auditorium of the parish house the following Sunday night and faced the curious, eager, expectant throng that filled it.

Yet he faced them not without preparation, albeit a preparation that they could not understand. Following his brief interviews with Doctor Roake, Ted Sayor, and the rector, he had sought the seclusion of his apartment in "Craggmont", nor had

appeared again until Sunday morning, when, as he had for appearance's sake made his wont, he accompanied Ethel and the senator to St. Jude's and sat in the rector's pew. In these days of solitude he had wrestled with the dark suggestion that rose in the guise of circumstance, as "acts of God," suggestions that would have mesmerized him into dominant moods of self-pity, sorrow, revenge, and strove for that spiritual attitude which would bring the blessing of healing to these of his fellows who had, in their dense ignorance, yielded themselves such ready channels for evil. "If I love them I cannot fail to help them," he kept repeating. And he knew that he could accomplish nothing for them nor for himself if aught of rebellion or hatred remained in his thought.

Yet it was not lightly accomplished; there had been long hours of bewilderment, of anxious groping. The temptation to personalize the cause of the afflictions which had come upon him was insistent. And to personalize meant to hate. It was not easy to hold to the metaphysical truth that right transformation of a circumstance is inhibited by condemnation. It seemed so particularly easy now to resort to the world's method of meeting error with brute force, of making evil real, and despising, hating, fighting it. Yet it is not by keeping the world's faults before our gaze that we correct them, for thus are they rendered permanent; but these faults, judged by a mentality purified by knowledge of the allness of Principle, lose their assumed character of stubborn realities and appear what they truly are, fictive, destructible concepts of the carnal mind. It was become Alden's task to look, not *at* these, but *through* them to the true ideas beyond. It was that which had saved him. It was that which could save these people. . .

But what should he say to them? Should he yield to the direction of fear as voiced by the rector? Would it be wise again to broach his rejected message? And if he spoke what was in his heart, would not these deluded worshipers of matter and the flesh cast him from their midst?

Peace came, after he had thrown himself upon the promise that "it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak. For it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you. . ."

"He comes to us as our soldier-hero," the rector announced as he presented Alden to the expectant multitude. "He comes like a returned Crusader. . ."

Alden rose and stood before them, tall, white, commanding. Yet it was not the Alden Cragg with whose appearance and character they were so familiar. "He looks like one of the old prophets," whispered Mrs. Tellus. "But why doesn't he wear his uniform?"

"He comes bearing the wound that he suffered for our sakes . . ." continued the rector.

"No," cried Alden, and at the sound of his voice the audience sat bolt upright; "it is a wound that hatred dealt me because I had failed to love!"

The startled rector paled, and his mouth hung open. Then he sought to cover the interruption and its portent with a tolerant smile. "It is the wonderful modesty of the hero," he went on shakily, "who returns still under the spell of the Holy City. It is of that city and his gallant part in its recapture that he will speak to-night. . ." With but few words more he terminated the introduction and yielded the floor. "Be careful, Alden," he whispered in an aside as he returned to his chair, "be *very* careful."

Alden stood for some moments silent, looking out over the heads of the hushed audience with unseeing eyes. In thought he was again in Jerusalem. Again he was treading a stony way. . .

"It is the Via Dolorosa," he said aloud and slowly. "And here in this house," extending a hand, "they tell us lived Dives. Before this doorway lay Lazarus, the beggar."

The audience turned one to another quizzically. "Is he out of his head?" queried Mrs. Kerl, raising her lorgnette.

"To Dives came the pleasures of matter. . ." Alden's voice penetrated to the farthest corner of the great hall; "to Lazarus, its pains. Yet neither knew that matter was but a mental concept, formed of thought; and neither knew that he must some time reap the harvest of his own thinking in regard to life. And each, obeying the false laws of matter, died." He stood for a moment in pause. And before he resumed he drew a deep sigh.

"Then each awoke. Does man awake from the sleep of death? Aye, that he does, as I have proved! And each found himself still alive, but on a mental plane differing from that which he had left. Each had but awakened to a new state of consciousness. And the rich man now was bitterly conscious of suffering; yet Lazarus was conscious of ease and comfort. But why?

"The rich man's life had been one of devotion to the thought of matter and its pleasures as real. To him, matter had become the only substance. His consciousness—his thought-activity—now had reaped the result of such false thought, for the accumulation of material thinking had at last 'helled' him about, and in its limitations, its falsities, he saw vast emptiness. Believing in the pleasures of matter, he had been forced to believe likewise in its pains, for one is as real as the other. This

ignorance had produced a state of mental distress called hell.

"But Lazarus, while on the former mental plane, had been compelled by the pains of matter to look beyond it for ease. His suffering had been just as real to him as pleasure had been to Dives, yet because of it he had turned from matter, and was no longer to be deceived into believing that happiness could be derived from it.

"And so Jesus showed that Lazarus was in Abraham's bosom, that he had arrived at the same mental state that Abraham had reached when he renounced the material idols of Ur and went to dwell in a better consciousness of Truth to work out his salvation from the hell of belief that matter is real. Abraham had caught a glimpse of the Christ. So, in looking beyond matter for real substance, had Lazarus.

"Dives cared not now what his former lot had been; he was concerned only that those who remained on that other plane should be warned, that they might break the mesmerism that made them blind materialists and become right-thinkers.

"So have I come to you, to cry *'Metanoia!'* " His voice rang out like a trumpet. "Get you a complete and radical change of thought, that your human consciousness may yield to spiritual consciousness, which is the only heaven! Get you that Mind which was in Christ Jesus—or sooner or later, on this mental plane or another, you will of a surety exchange your present illusive pleasures of matter for its sharper pains!"

"Alden!" The rector's troubled whisper pierced the silence.

The audience sat staring in blank amazement. Alden looked out upon them, and a wistful smile came into his face. His gaze fell upon Ethel, open-mouthed, angry-eyed, and his head bent slightly toward her. Beside her sat her astonished mother, vaguely sensing a premonition of humiliation to her social prestige. With them was Harris Chaddock, lolling with an elbow on the top of the seat and a sneer lifting the corners of his expressive mouth. About them were grouped the Telluses, the Blacks, the Kerls. . .

His eyes wandered slowly about the room. Then they hung. In the rear of the hall sat a woman with snow-white hair. He recognized her. It was the Galuth! His lips parted, and he stood staring at her across the multitude.

And as he stood, the people recovered, and turned to exchange with one another meaningful looks and nods, and to throw significant, unvoiced queries toward Mrs. Whittier, and glances of sympathy at the red-faced rector sitting in confusion on the rostrum behind Alden.

Then the audience caught its breath, for Alden was again speaking. And now his voice had dropped low, and his tones

were laden with awful solemnity. "A bullet, hurled by hatred, drove me into the vestibule of death. . ."

The audience moved, as if one. Doctor Roake was seen to lean far forward.

"I awoke, on another plane of thought; yet I was still in the flesh, and my thinking was even more densely material. I loved. I hated. And, oh, how I suffered! For I . . . was . . . in . . . *hell!*"

Gasps were heard throughout the hall. A child began to whimper. The rector started to rise, but sat back again, for Alden had resumed.

"I was there because I had denied the infinite Principle—God. Because of such denial I had thrust myself out into the chaos of unprincipled mortal concepts. The violence of the discord in which I found myself was in the ratio of my former denial. The road back to a consciousness of good was then even longer, more choked with obstacles, with suffering, than it had been in my former state of consciousness that I had called life. There could be no escape until my thinking should, through unspeakable toil and agony, lose its materiality, and better thought should take its place and by its activity produce a conscious state of greater harmony.

"Yet was I but in the vestibule of death, scarce past its threshold. And to me there came, through the love of another, the Christ. I heard the call. I awoke to this state of consciousness . . . yet not the same, for the former man was dead, his consciousness replaced by one more spiritual."

He paused, but only for an instant. Thrusting out his arms to the staring people he cried: "Oh, *you* may hear this call, here, this night, if you will!"

The rector's hand came down heavily upon the arm of his chair. Alden turned to him and smiled.

Then he again faced the people. "You wish me to speak of Jerusalem," he said, "of what I saw. . . Ah, yes, I saw the lepers, beyond the gates. I saw the spot where the Master stood and demonstrated the presence of God to the rotting lepers. He did not bind these men with health laws; he did not inject poisonous pus into their bodies to vaccinate against the disease. He did not pasteurize, sterilize, disinfect, and inoculate their environment and associates. He did not quarantine. He did not cut and mutilate, nor lay laws of death upon these afflicted ones who appealed to him for aid. Nor did he, when conscious of his great powers, set up a medical tyranny nor an unholy alliance with the existing form of religion to fetter men's thought and dominate them mind and body. . .

"Yes, I walked the streets where Luke walked with Paul. And I thought then of Luke, the beloved, conscientious physician, a good physician, yearning to benefit his fellow men, and how he came to learn of the Nazarene's teachings, thinking to combine them with his own practice of medicine, but cast from him at once and forever his former unscientific material practices for the scientific Christianity taught and demonstrated by the Master."

A murmur rose from the audience. The rector sprang to his feet and rushed to Alden's side, but halted, for a loud voice was heard from the center of the hall. "Let him go on!" It was Ted Sayor, standing with eyes flashing and hands gripped to the seat in front of him.

Excited exclamations, some loud, some muffled, came from all parts of the hall. Many rose. Glances, wild, eager, apprehensive, amazed, shot swiftly from the audience to the rostrum, to Ted Sayor, and back again. The rector stepped back and stood hesitant, white and trembling.

"The world that I left was sick." Alden was again speaking.

The people fell into their seats. Alden went on. "It was sick unto death. The world that I have returned to is dying. Yet you who listen to me know, even as I, that there is but one thing wrong with it. But you dare not confess it. *It is ignorance of God!*

"Yet you do not even *try* to know God, for you are mesmerized by the belief that after death you shall be suddenly ushered into His presence. Time enough to know Him then! Alas! you have made but a material concept of Him, and you worship it in puerile lip-service! You are mesmerized by error into putting all things into the future, though God is ever-present. You miss perfection, harmony, happiness, wholeness, because error has relegated them to the same illusive future. . .

"Hear me, I beg of you! For I come to you in Truth! I was a member of St. Jude's; I held the same high estimate of material methods that you hold now; my religion was but your conventional, man-made organization of material hopes and aspirations; my theology was cloaked with morality, ethics, and social service. It is these that now justify the closing of your church as unessential in this hour of need. . ."

The rector started forward, but paused, then turned back and fell into his chair.

"Oh, that you might know that the prime necessity of this life is to acquire the true idea of heaven!" cried Alden. "Nineteen hundred years of theology have left us with a world sick unto death, with churches that minister largely to private propaganda and to leaders in business, politics, medicine. Yet

there cometh now Truth, the latchet of whose shoe your theology is not worthy to loose. Hear me, I beg! For I come to you in Love!

"For pure Christianity is again among men. By it shall be healed the world's ills. The call has come for the sacrifice of material things that precedes the spiritual knowledge that alone constitutes heaven. Evil, sickness, sin, death *must* be mastered by us sooner or later. While we delay, we suffer. And the suffering grows. When, then, shall we begin?

"The call has gone forth for real thinkers, for it is the right thinking of those who reflect the Mind that is God that alone can save you and cure your sore ills. Right thinking alone can detect the subtle mesmerism that here in your midst has yoked religion with medicine for the domination of a sleeping world. Right thinking will cause those bills to be torn from Congress, the passage of which would make you helpless in the grip of the political doctor. . .

"Here, in this parish house, but a few days ago I heard a discussion of remedies for the world's ills. I was deeply moved —not by what was said, but by what was deliberately avoided: mention of God as the sole cure.

"What kept you from speaking of Him who is your very Life? Why did you hold up every conceivable material remedy, every invention of mortal man, and exhaust these in your discussion until very logic demanded that you speak of God, and then fall mute without voicing His name?"

Silence as of the tomb lay upon the scene. Out of it Alden's voice burst forth: "It was because God has never become *real* to you! It was because *matter* is your only god! . . ."

"I protest!" Mr. Tellus was on his feet. "Father Whittier, I protest!" Others sprang up exclaiming.

Alden's voice soared high above the rising din. "Hear me, for I bring you primitive Christianity! Hear me, for *I have seen the Christ!*"

"He's mad!". . .

"Put him out! I didn't come here to be insulted!". . .

"Call a doctor! A woman has fainted!". . .

The rector now had leaped up and seized Alden by the arm. Alden shook him off, and the rector fell up against the wall and slipped to the floor.

"I call heaven and earth to record this day against you. . ."

Amid the welter, the hurried shuffling, the cries, exclamations, silence suddenly fell, and the people crouched cowering before the ominous words that now thundered forth freighted with righteous wrath from this white-haired, spectral figure. . .

"I call heaven and earth to record this day against you,

that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore CHOOSE! . . ."

A momentary pause, a tense hush, then someone cried out: "The fellow is *cursing* us!" At that, pandemonium broke forth. Doctor Roake, Tellus, Kerl and others rushed to the rostrum. Some stopped to minister to the fallen rector; Doctor Roake and Harris Chaddock seized Alden and hurried him away. Mrs. Whittier had collapsed. Ethel sat rigid and glaring.

Mr. Tellus hastened to the front of the rostrum and held up a hand. "My friends!" he called loudly. The confusion and clamor abated somewhat, and he proceeded with trembling voice. "As chairman of the vestry I wish to disavow any responsibility for what you have heard this evening. It is evident that our friend has returned from the war in a sad state of religious confusion. I am sure our good rector was unaware of what the young man intended to say. However, we assure you that the vestry will thoroughly sift the matter and take all remedial steps necessary. You will please now disperse quietly, bearing with you our deep regrets for the wholly unanticipated address to which you have been subjected."

CHAPTER 12

AT noon Alden rose from his bed where he had thrown himself the night before fully dressed. He had shaken himself free of those who had sought to lay hands on him, and had passed from the parish house out into the darkness alone. Alone, and absorbed, he had walked to "Craggmont". Nor had the consuming zeal of his Father's house abated until he had sat far into the morning hours in the isolation of his apartment. Then, exhausted, he had dropped into a heavy sleep.

As he rose, Jedkins entered with a letter. Alden read it, and again. Then he took it to Ethel's apartment.

The maid admitted him. Ethel, half dressed, reclined on a divan, smoking a cigarette and sipping her coffee. She turned languidly as he entered, bade the maid be gone, and demanded sourly: "What do you want?"

"We must leave 'Craggmont'," he said gravely.

"Humph! I should think you'd leave town, after last night," she retorted. "Well, why do you come here?"

"To tell you that we must leave 'Craggmont'," he repeated.

"*We?*" She laughed derisively. "You're crazy!" Then

her face drew into an ugly scowl and her tone became menacing. "Where is the deed to this place that you promised me? People as pious as you publicly profess to be are always liars."

"I would keep my promise if I could," he answered, speaking low. "But 'Craggmont' is no longer mine. I have just received this letter from Cress and Hail. It confirms what I have said. The estate is involved; the Courts will not interfere. Nothing can be done at present, the lawyers say. They say too that Senator Chaddock wishes to rid himself at once of the burden of supporting us. They enclose a check, a small one, which they say is due me. But I cannot expect more. So I must . . . seek employment . . . to-day."

For a moment Ethel lay speechless. Then she sprang up, her anger hissing forth reptilian. "You . . . *you* did this! You . . . with your crazy religious notions! You deliberately insulted Papa and the Church and Crestelridge last night, and now they have kicked you out! Oh, you miserable fool! I hate you! . . . *hate* you! I'll divorce you, you spineless milk-sop! . . . you . . . you . . . Get out of here! Get out!"

"You will have to leave with me," he proceeded quietly, "if you wish to prevent the malicious gossip that would ruin your name."

She recoiled. "Oh," she gasped, "you hold *that* over me! You threaten to tell the world *that!* . . . They won't believe you! You're *insane!*"

"I shall not need to tell the world," he said inexorably. "You are about to reveal it yourself."

"*Oh!*"

"And for that reason you plan to go to Florida into hiding until spring."

"Oh," she panted, "then this is your revenge? You married me for *this?* You will try to keep me from going to Florida? Oh, you brute! You snake! . . ."

"I have told you that I married you to protect you and your child," he answered steadily. "That protection is still yours. You are utterly ruined if you do not continue to avail yourself of it. Ethel, let me help you! . . . I am sorry I cannot keep you in 'Craggmont', but I shall try to secure a position at once and support you. . . Oh, Ethel, if you would but hear me, work with me! . . ."

"Support me!" She burst into a delirious laugh. "*You?* Why, you couldn't support a canary! You'll starve, you poor fool! But don't kid yourself that I shall starve with you!"

"And what do you purpose doing?"

"I shall divorce you . . . for non-support!"

"You cannot, on that ground, for all that I have and earn

shall be yours. And because of public opinion, and to save your father's name, to save your future, you must remain my wife until after . . . until spring."

She sank upon the divan and sat staring at him with glassy eyes. He stood looking at her appealingly for some moments; then, with a sigh, he turned and went to the door, where he halted and faced her again. "I am leaving 'Craggmont' now," he continued. "I have this check, enough for your fare to Florida and to keep you there a few weeks. Shall I arrange for your transportation to-day?"

She struggled with herself for a moment. "Yes!" she whispered hoarsely. "I'll go . . . to-night!". . .

From the tone of the letter which he had received that morning it was patent to Alden that Senator Chaddock did not wish a further interview with him. In a sense he had been paid off and dismissed. Other things were equally obvious; but it had not seemed necessary to voice these to Ethel, for he had again laid himself upon the altar, and she had eagerly accepted his sacrifice.

He walked to the city and secured transportation for her on the train leaving New York at midnight. This done, he telephoned to "Craggmont" and arranged with Jedkins to pack his few effects and hold them to await his further advice. Thereupon he went to the rectory to deliver the tickets and money to Ethel, for he would return to "Craggmont" no more.

As he went, a sense of failure assailed him. He had not prevailed against the innate tendency of the human mind to combat Truth. They were crying for help, these who had rejected him; yet fear held them clinging tenaciously to the false, believing as they did that the testimony of the physical senses must be true. They cried out for Good; yet did they in their mesmerism resist it, except it should come in a guise of their own outlining, in a manner, a time, a material manifestation to be dictated by the carnal mind. Salvation lies in thinking—and they agreed with him, but insisted that the thinking be material. Because he had pointed out that such thinking leads but to death, they had shouted: "Crucify him!"

But, had he relinquished the struggle, would peace have come? He knew that it would not, for there is no peace outside the demonstration of Principle. Yet had he found none to demonstrate Principle in this world of mortal mind to which he had returned, this seething sea of animal magnetism, autohypnosis, and aggressive mental suggestion, where every mortal was but a mental manipulator, legislating his neighbor to suffering and death with the mortal laws of matter.

"Yet I love them," he murmured. "The God who is Love has sent me to them. And He knows why."

At a window of the rectory he saw Ethel and her mother, but when he entered they had disappeared. He asked for them. The maid returned with their excuses. Neither was well. They would see him at the train that night. And the maid was obliged to repeat the message before he quite comprehended.

He then asked for the rector. Again the maid returned with excuses. The rector was particularly busy—would be closely occupied all day. Would Alden please call the following morning at ten?

Alden left the tickets and all but a few dollars of his remaining money with the maid and departed dumfounded. In the street he stood, uncertain whither to go. A cold wind swept around the corner of the great ecclesiastical pile and urged him on. Dead leaves rattled over the snow that lay yellow in the jaundiced light of the low winter sun. . .

He started away as a thought smote him: the demonstration of employment was now upon him! He moved on with quickening footsteps.

But what could he do? for as yet his hand had not been employed in his own support. Of business he knew nothing, as the world reckons knowledge. In the estimate of his fellows he had never really earned the price of a loaf!

He found himself in the business district with these reflections urging hard upon him. Abstractedly he turned into a large office building. It was a hive of activity; people hurried to and fro through its marble corridors bent on their pursuits of material gain. He watched them, unnoticed. Then he entered an elevator, and aimlessly left it at the third floor. He opened the first door that he came to and asked for employment. He was not fully awake to his own conduct. The manager lifted his brows in surprise at the white-haired figure and replied that he had nothing to offer. The experiment was repeated in another office, and still another. "But who are you?" asked one. And when he gave his name he was met with a laugh and the query: "Haven't you read the morning papers yet?" For a lurid account of his address in the parish house the preceding evening had in some manner slipped into the yawning maw of the metropolitan press.

He exhausted the possibilities of the building and sought another. Few asked his name, and those who did invariably manifested great surprise, and some winked at others and tapped their foreheads significantly. One responded with a guffaw: "Alden Cragg, eh? My God, man! you ought to be on exhibition in a museum."

Night fell, and the offices closed. He went to the International Club and inquired for Ted Sayor, but was informed that the young man was dining out. But he would wait in the lounging room. . . Better still, he would spend the night at the club, of which he had been an honored member. He turned to the elevator to ascend, but stopped short, stood staring for a moment, then wheeled abruptly and hastened out into the darkened street. He had caught sight of his name, posted. . .

He procured his supper at an unfamiliar restaurant, and chose an obscure corner. He had been strangely unable to think since his visit to the rectory, his thought seemed so tired, so crowded; and now he sat over his meal in a state of mental vacuity—sat so long that the proprietor bade an officer watch him.

When he left the restaurant he wandered without direction. He could not return to "Craggmont"—and the messages from the rector and his family had amounted to requests to absent himself from them. He could not now seek Ted Sayor again. And the Telluses, Blacks, Kerls, they had all been outraged by his talk in the parish house, he knew. . .

He dropped into a public reading-room and remained till it closed. Then he roamed the echoing streets until time to go into the metropolis to the depot from which Ethel would depart. In his isolation, the thought of seeing even her brought a sense of cheer.

But there, though he paced the waiting-rooms until midnight, and then watched the "Florida Special" depart, he saw no sign of Ethel or her family. Yet he was certain that he could not have missed them. He inquired futilely among the red-capped porters. Then he went hesitatingly to a telephone booth and called the rectory, in Crestelridge.

"Oh, yes," he was informed by the rector himself, who was working late on his Sunday sermon, "yes, they left, Ethel and her mother. They . . . er . . . had their reservations changed this afternoon to the ten o'clock train."

Alden hung up the receiver and turned away with unsteady step. An hour later, back in Crestelridge, he sank upon a bed in a little room in one of the cheaper hotels and dropped his head into his hands. Since his visit to the rectory that afternoon he had let himself be driven, driven, driven. . .

"And yet I know that I have passed from death unto life," he murmured, "because I love them."

CHAPTER 13

WITH the beginning of another day rose the full tide of the serpent's accusations against Alden. Impoverished!—he who had never known a want unmet. Penniless and wandering!—he who had dozed in satiety 'neath Fortune's smiles in incomparable "Craggmont". Incredible! But the pitiable lightness of his purse was the testimony of sense that condemned him.

As he proceeded in his search for employment his mentality became an arena, staging a roaring conflict between a trust in his understanding of the Omnipotence which had raised him and the mounting distrust of human endeavor. Compete with the cunning of human thinking—he? Suggestion's dispiriting voice soared high in mockery. "What you are capable of doing for the world is not worth your living!" And when he looked in the direction of limited human capacity he knew it was so.

Yet when he viewed the case through the lens of Truth he could see that knowing God was man's only true employment, even as the wise Nazarene had taught. Demonstration of the activity of infinite Principle was individual employment for all mankind. In its demonstration all bodily needs would be met. And striving to retain his mental grasp of this spiritual weapon through the noise and smoke of suggestion's attacks, he tramped the streets throughout the day.

He did not go to the rectory at ten. He felt that his problem lay not there. His thought was now known to the rector: there was no call for debate on it. A demonstration of supply now constituted his temporary employment; and arguments with the rector could but impede it.

The day passed; another succeeded it; still others followed dully in their wake. They were drab and humanly empty. There was need of men to fill various positions, he learned, but always something seemed to come between them and him. Yet he remembered Marian's oft-repeated prayer: "Father, I thank Thee that there is nothing between Thee and me"—It was but error's shadow that lay between him and his place. . .

Some laughed at his answers to their questions, at the revelation of his ignorance of the accepted and age-honored human concept of business. Some were bluff, discourteous, rude. Others were kindly, but shook their heads. "You're too old," some said, as they glanced at his white hair. Yet he was not thirty. And still others, to whom the Cragg name had been synonymous with the tyranny of wealth and social prestige,

shrugged their shoulders and manifested pleasure in showing him the door. And withal, it soon became noised abroad that young Cragg, penniless—"a little off up here", pointing to the head—was, in familiar parlance, "hunting a job". And the business world wondered, but smiled over the joke.

The rumor of course reached the ears of Doctor Roake—Harris Chaddock had seen Alden going in and out of office buildings in search of work, and had grimly remarked that he should be captured and fumigated because of such promiscuous contact with humanity. The doctor packed his comment into a single expression: "Remarkable receptivity!" But as he voiced it he smiled.

The rumor reached the ears of the élite of St. Jude's, and was thence borne to the rector, who became so perturbed that he sought Doctor Roake.

"It would reflect upon you and yours, as you say," the doctor thoughtfully replied, when the rector had voiced his fears, "but for the fact that Alden has shown himself mentally unbalanced. I can only suggest that we bring him before a lunacy commission for investigation. He probably should be sent to a sanitarium. There is now no doubt that he is mildly insane. But I suggest that he be allowed further opportunity to thoroughly manifest his mental condition."

"It is *terrible!*" cried the rector, wringing his hands. "He has not returned to 'Craggmont' since Ethel departed. I . . . I have been daily, hourly, expecting that he would come to me. I had no idea his mental condition was so bad until he gave that unfortunate talk. I must find him at once and have him brought to the rectory for care!"

"Let me find him," the doctor offered sympathetically. "Let us handle this case with the least publicity. . ."

And the Telluses, Blacks, and Kerls murmured sagely: "I told you so," and felt now abundantly able to account for all the vagaries, discrepancies, and irregularities of Alden's conduct since his return from the war.

On the day that the rector had taken his burden to Doctor Roake, Alden found himself without funds. The sight of his empty purse produced within him the sensation of a shock. Through his stunned thought there seemed to echo a cruel taunt: In a universe supposedly governed by divine goodness there was a demand for which had been found no supply. Evil's sharpest tool, discouragement, was cutting at his faith's foundations.

Yet the Christ had proved the reverse of the mortal lie to be always true. And therefore it must be the demand itself that is created by the supply. If Alden was now called upon

to give to the world sufficient work of a quality to deserve in return a needful supply of shelter, clothing, food, then it must needs be that he already possessed the good he sought, else were there nothing to create the demand. True demand and true supply must balance.

Food and clothing are primarily mental concepts—so he had already learned. And mental concepts are the product of thinking. Penury is of the thought ere it becomes externalized in the empty purse. And penury of thought results from the failure to subordinate the material to the spiritual and render power unto that only which proceeds from Principle, God.

That morning, while reasoning thus—and while the rector and Doctor Roake were earnestly discussing his case—Alden halted abruptly before a garage where an employe was washing a car. The sight roused him, and as he stood he heard in thought Elisha's pregnant question: "What hast thou in the house?" Under its spur he turned and entered. "I can wash cars," he said eagerly. And because there was a shortage of help he was forthwith set to work. At that moment the Cragg prestige touched its nadir.

Preliminary to handling the case, Doctor Roake located Alden, after some days, through the aid of a detective agency. Then Harris Chaddock drove to the garage, with Madeline Nence, the grinning Freddy Kerl, Louise Black, and others in his big red car, and stopped for oil. And Alden, in soiled jumpers, grease-streaked and begrimed, his white hair daubed and his face black and sweaty, filled the tank and the grease cups, and was met with blank stares when he touched his dirty cap and sought to address them. From the proprietor of the garage Harris learned that Alden had deported himself normally and that his work was good. And Harris, after reflecting for some moments, departed, having first obtained from the proprietor the address of Alden's cheap boarding house.

That night an investigation was made—under the protecting Wess law—for there was a case of diphtheria in that neighborhood, and Harris remembered that Alden had had the disease many years ago, and therefore might now be a "carrier". Alden was summoned forth, subjected to a rigid examination, cultures were taken from his throat, and he was ordered to remain in his room, while a quarantine placard was affixed to the door of the house without.

The enforced confinement of a fortnight wrought the loss of Alden's position at the garage and his ejection from the boarding house under a burden of debt. He would have been remanded to the County Hospital under arrest, but for the fact

that Harris had found it impossible to trace the diphtheria case to him. Few words had passed between Alden and Harris. The latter had appeared quite consistently in the capacity of legally appointed conservator of the public health, and Alden bowed in penitence before the iniquitous law whose passage he had once eagerly labored to obtain.

Again in the streets—but now with a quickened sense of danger—Alden wandered back to the garage where he had been employed. But the proprietor feared to admit him, lest the place be quarantined. . . "And the quarantine works hell with business, ye know," he said. "But," he went on, "you ought to get a job out doors. You can drive a car, ye know. . . By the way, here's the address of a woman who wants a chauffeur. She sent it here to-day." And he thrust a card into Alden's hand and bade him luck.

Alden slipped the card into a pocket and turned away. He was now an outcast, he who had seen the Christ! He moved as in a dream. Then, as he slowly came to himself, he resolved to avoid the office buildings and try for employment among the garages. And he spent the day searching, yet without success. His pockets and purse were again empty, and he passed the restaurants without looking in. But late in the afternoon fatigue overcame him, and he sought a bench in the public square for a moment's rest. He did not know where he should spend the approaching night.

As he sat there he tried to remind himself that he was in truth a son of God, tried to know that *"I will never leave thee nor forsake thee"*, tried to realize that Marian's demonstration had not been vain, that no word of truth is ever lost. But the venomous suggestion stung him incessantly that the deep spirituality with which he had returned to this sense of life at Marian's call had been dulled, and his thought, despite his incessant efforts, was become of very necessity too material to accomplish a demonstration of substance.

Yet he realized that substance was not something to get, but a spiritual possession to know that he already had. Money, he must know, was not substance, but merely its symbol. And spiritual understanding could produce that symbol whenever necessity arose. This had the Nazarene proved when he demonstrated the tribute money in—of all places!—a fish's mouth.

Yet the Master knew that that was not the place to look for substance, for Mind is substance, infinite and ever at hand. And but for the inherent tendency of the mortal mind to combat all knowledge of Truth, it would be demonstrated instantly to meet every right demand. Could humanity detect and

destroy the carnal error that makes matter substance, could it accept the facts of Spirit in exchange for the false testimony of physical sense, it would cease looking for supply in the fish's mouth—in banks and bonds, in gold and lands—and find it in Mind, whose thoughts, reflected by mankind, will become externalized in the supplying of every real need.

Man's business is not to *do*, but to *be*. And real business activity is the reflection of God. A knowledge of God as Principle removes concern about daily supplies. To the extent that one is able to manifest the Christ in his daily affairs is he really successful. *"To as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God. . ."* To those who receive the spiritual idea there is no lack of any good. The Master's statements were not mere promises: they were declarations of divine law. And divine law is unaffected by human conditions, and absolutely sure. But to understand man as a son of God one must lose the material sense of life.

Alden knew this, for Marian had pointed it out in those long talks in the Temple cistern. He knew it as he sat there, his head clasped in his hands, while the serpent hissed forth its sickening lie. But his long struggle had brought a sense of utter weariness, his thought seemed to lag, his spirits to droop. He had not believed that he would be cast forth so quickly upon his own untried thought. He had supposed that Marian would remain to walk with him, to guide him through the deep waters by her clearer vision. But she had sent him from her. . .

He glanced up. A big red car was threading its way through the traffic. It was driven by Harris Chaddock. And beside him sat a policeman. Alden shrank back. Were they searching for him, these zealous protectors of the public health? Well he knew that Harris Chaddock's persecutions were but just begun.

The car passed, and Alden's head again dropped into his hands. The night was lowering . . . yet she had promised to hear his call through the darkness. His throat filled, a sob shook him, and he murmured aloud: "Marian! . . . Marian! . . . I want you! . . ."

His thought leaped, as under a lash, to the card which the garage owner had given him. He had forgotten it. He raised up, drew it forth, and studied it. There was no name, but the address appeared vaguely familiar. He rose abruptly, as if drawn by an invisible hand, and started away.

His course took him out of the business district, and almost before he had sensed his environment he was approaching "Craggmont". He stopped, drew out the card and studied it again. But he could not place it. Then he went on, on past

"Craggmont", stately and beautiful, scene of his vast delusion —on and up the opposite hill. . .

And then he stopped at a gate and stood looking from the card to the number on the house beyond. They were identical, but . . . there must be some mistake, for . . . *the Galuth lived there!*

He turned and looked back. Could he face *her?* This lone woman whom he had reviled, persecuted, denounced? Could he ask *her* for employment? This creature whom he had adjudged a witch, a harridan, a worker of necromancy, and, from his vast superiority, had so utterly despised? Would he become her . . . *chauffeur?*

His head sank and his shoulders bent. And as he hung there the tears dropped from his cheeks.

Then he opened the gate and entered, penitent, humble, and stood at the door. It opened at once, and he looked down into the smiling face of the woman.

"I have been waiting for you, Alden," she said gently. "Come in."

He stared, fascinated. It was the most wonderful face he had ever seen. And the little room into which he so slowly entered seemed to envelope him like great, motherly arms. He paused, caught his breath, and sank into a chair, as a storm-beaten vessel drops anchor in a sheltering haven.

The woman drew up a teacart, on which were sandwiches, cakes and steaming chocolate. "It was Marian who sent for you," she said, seating herself beside him and raising her astonishing face to his.

He sprang up. "Marian!" he cried. "Is she here?"

The woman reached out and took his hand. "She sent for you through me," she said, drawing him gently back to his chair. She did not say that she had received a letter from Marian the day Alden arrived in Crestelridge, and that the girl had written: "His footsteps may falter. Call him to you. Guide him. And love him, love him."

CHAPTER 14

AGAIN was the treacherous peace enveloping St. Jude's endangered, for the rector had observed Alden Cragg driving a car in which sat the Galuth. And the sight had so dumfounded the good man that he had stood rooted to the spot as the vehicle passed. When he recovered, he hurried to Doctor Roake.

"He was located, yes," the doctor admitted. "Didn't Harris inform you? But he escaped us. And now you say he was with Madam Galuth? Incredible! But," he reflected, leaning back in his chair and studying his cigar, "this is rather fortunate. I will learn what his association with her means. If he is in her employ, I suggest that we leave him there, temporarily. It will . . . H'm! . . . it will fit into our plan, I think." And the disturbed rector permitted himself to be influenced, but departed with his thought sorely troubled.

The close neighborhood of the Telluses, Blacks, and Kerls fed avidly on the suggestions which the rare discovery stimulated. "That settles it!" Mrs. Black proclaimed definitively. "He certainly *is* abnormal! His wild talk in the parish house should have convinced us!"

"But," sighed Mrs. Kerl, "what lofty words he used that night! Did you notice his English? So pure and strong! He never talked that way before he went to war. I never heard anyone speak so nobly. And Alden was never accounted learned, yet . . ."

"Is it true," Mrs. Black put in, "that he has been reduced to working for a living?"

"Why, as I get it from Henry," Mrs. Tellus elaborated, "the estate is tied up, with Senator Chaddock as . . . well, as sort of custodian, you might say. They'll have to wait till the war ends to straighten it all out. Meantime, Henry says, Doctor Roake offered Alden a wonderful position—in fact, he suspected Alden's condition and was really offering to take care of him. But don't tell I said this, will you?"

"And Alden refused it?" exclaimed Mrs. Black. "But, of course, he didn't realize what he was doing, any more than he did when he gave that awful talk in St. Jude's. . . And you say he went to work in a *garage!*" Her tones sank almost to a whisper as she voiced the awful fact.

"Yes," chimed in Mrs. Kerl. "And Freddy and some of the others saw him—just happened to stop there with Harris Chaddock—and he was a perfect *sight!*"

"But how do you suppose he happens to be with the Galuth?" queried Mrs. Black in a voice a bit awe-toned.

"The Galuth, of all people!" echoed Mrs. Kerl. "But I suppose she saw his condition and hypnotized him in some way. Probably she figures on getting her mercenary clutches on the estate when it is released, don't you think?"

"Well," observed Mrs. Black, nodding emphasis to her words, "they say she finished Marian Whittier, and now she's doing the same with poor demented Alden. I presume it's her revenge for the way people have treated her. But why doesn't the rector interfere and save him from her?"

"He would," Mrs. Tellus succinctly explained, "only Henry says Doctor Roake advised him to wait and let the law deal with her. You know, she poses as a sort of healer, cures with hypnotism and suggestion. . . I don't know. Anyway, she breaks the law doing it, and they are just waiting for someone to die under her treatment, and then they'll get her. That's what Henry said. But don't for the world tell this! I promised him I wouldn't breathe it."

"Poor Ethel!" sighed Mrs. Black. "But she is well out of it. She probably saw what was coming and hadn't the strength to go through it."

"But why," queried Mrs. Kerl, "did the girl marry him in the first place? They say she just couldn't wait. . ."

"Nonsense!" Mrs. Tellus interrupted. "I am in a position to know that Alden was the one who hurried the wedding. Mrs. Whittier practically said so. It's *my* opinion that he knew he would get nothing from the Cragg estate for a long while, perhaps never, and so he rushed her into marriage with him to be sure of the Penberry millions and have a roof to get under in the meantime. That was before he got so bad mentally. Now, Henry says, . . . But don't breathe a word of this, will you? . . . that Senator Chaddock went into Court a few days ago and got an order preventing the return of the estate to Alden until his . . . his . . . What do you call it? . . . his *normalcy* can be determined."

"Do tell!" exclaimed Mrs. Kerl, making a mental note to report it at once to Mrs. Nence.

"Isn't it strange!" murmured Mrs. Black. "Dear, dear, the war has changed everything and everybody!"

"Oh, I don't know," Mrs. Tellus returned easily. "The war has afforded us a lot of diversion. It's been a pretty good thing for most of us too, now hasn't it? Certainly, as Henry says, the Tellus family isn't complaining." And her satisfaction was emphasized by her light laugh.

Again, and often, was Alden seen driving the car in which sat the Galuth, and soon Doctor Roake's investigation disclosed the fact that he was really in her employ. This item of rare interest was thoroughly disseminated by Harris Chaddock, and shortly the metropolitan press featured the story in a hectic Sunday supplement romance dealing with the fall of a rich young prig and his subsequent rescue and employment by a woman whom he had previously sorely persecuted, from which maudlin tale the usual threadbare moral was drawn, dripping with cloying orthodoxy.

To Ted Savor the odd reversal of Alden's circumstances appeared at first highly diverting. *"And in my prosperity I said, I shall never be moved,"* he murmured cynically. . .

But then his own thought clouded, and his reflections became unwontedly serious. The security of his own position had caused him wakeful nights these past weeks; there had come to him often fearful, insidious suggestions of disintegration, physical, financial, moral, and under the subtle working of a powerful animus, deeply hidden but at least suspected—and, worse, one that he was beginning to believe inescapable!

From derision, his sentiment toward Alden changed to pity. And then a horrifying sense of fear seized upon him and he lapsed into moods of hopelessness, alternating with mournful longing for a return of his own thoughtless days of security and peace. He would have gone to Alden then, but that he did not dare, for the realization had come to him that he was now bound to a master who held in his grip the issues of life and death. Dread apprehension and the nostalgic longing for that which was gone alone remained to him through these days of empty waiting. "Oh," he would cry, "will this war never end?" But, when ended, what then?

To the rector, Alden's sad condition and sharp reverses, together with Doctor Roake's peculiar manner of handling the situation, brought added confusion. Moreover, his fear and pity were now mingled with a deepening sense of personal chagrin, born of Doctor Roake's apparent neglect of St. Jude's place in the great religio-medical plan. The Triennial General Convention was held, long since, yet the doctor had not referred to the rector's proposal to lay before that august body the wonderful scheme. Yet the doctor was now inordinately busy, sending broadcast tons of propaganda literature; bringing the matter before Women's Clubs throughout the country, and through them thoroughly organizing the women; arranging for Chautauqua speakers, for physical culture clubs, "baby shows"; every possible device to enlist the enthusiastic support of the mothers; organizing the preachers, penetrating the theological seminaries, the gymnasia—and yet all quite without the rector's aid or advice. A startling query suggested to the rector: Was the doctor through with him—even as he appeared to be with Senator Chaddock, who likewise had rendered him yeoman service?

But in the senator's case ill health might be assigned as the cause, for the senator certainly was failing, and rapidly. "He appears to be going to pieces," the rector wonderingly reflected again and again. And the symptoms of doddering senility had become so apparent of late that the rector had felt impelled to mention them to others. "He doesn't talk coherently, and he has acquired a distressing habit of mumbling as he walks," he observed to Harris. But the latter, while he admitted the

facts, gave evidence of slight interest, so completely engrossed was he in his own affairs. And the rector now hesitated to take the matter to Doctor Roake.

Now all this insistently suggested to the harassed rector its complicity with Alden's case, remote as that might appear, and caused him again and again to review the events of the past year, from the youth's oddly effected enlistment down through the startling circumstances of Mrs. Cragg's illness, her marriage to the senator, the entanglement of the Cragg estate, Senator Chaddock's disintegration, Ethel's inexplicable conduct and uncanny marriage, and Alden's ghostly return from war and his lapse into his now pitiable mental state. And as he reflected, his heart would often stand still for very fear of the dark suggestions that rose through the welter of his thought: could any of this be attributed to Marian's influence—or, more likely, the Galuth's? He knew—for Doctor Roake had referred to it casually in his presence—that there were organizations in large cities throughout the country where hypnotism was studied and practiced, and where professional hypnotists were trained. The doctor had once spoken of the possibilities arising from the unifying of these organizations—many of them secret—and the directing of their mental work toward certain specific ends, for example, the religio-medical plan, if the rector approved. Was it probable that the Galuth was such a trained mental manipulator, that she had corrupted Marian and alienated her from him and his family, and that she had now seized upon Alden, and that even the unsuspecting senator and the light-hearted Ted Sayor had fallen under her silently exercised and far-reaching influence? There had been a serpent in the Garden of Eden. . .

The rector was glad that Mrs. Whittier and Ethel were away. He was glad he did not hear from Marian, that he knew not where she was, and that she would probably never return to Crestelridge. And he was deeply glad of his church, into the activities of which he could plunge, as now, and escape—at least temporarily—the pelting of these dark suggestions that made such a jumble of his thought. St. Jude's was a haven, ever broadening, inclusive, secure.

Yet even there, riding safely upon its calm waters, his thought would stray out to the troubled sea beyond, where Alden tossed; and often he would resolve to go to him—and as often a dark shadow would come between him and the youth, and he would cower before it. "Ah, what a puzzling, saddening, terrible thing is human life!" he would murmur. "Will we ever really know what it is?"

But that human life is a series of states of false conscious-

ness, apparently beginning with birth, seemingly ending in death, yet only to begin again on another plane, had been demonstrated to Alden Cragg. That he had been called back to it for a divine purpose, to labor for his endangered fellow men, was likewise patent to him. But that he could not awaken them from their mesmerism merely by the spoken word had not been fully impressed upon him until he had been cast out of St. Jude's, his message rejected, and had been thrust into the streets penniless, with the mortal law of insanity laid upon him. Then did Marian's oft-repeated words become the nucleus of his new life-motif: "the *demonstration* of Israel."

Madam Galuth had asked him no questions, this remarkable woman, but had offered him employment, at a reasonable wage, and the free use of the little apartment over her garage. He had accepted both gratefully; and though he demurred when she pressed upon him an advance of a month's wages, he had yielded and taken it. From it he reimbursed his former landlady for her loss sustained through his enforced quarantine, and sent the balance to the rector, with the request that he forward it at once to Ethel. This done, he consecrated himself to his duties and his demonstration.

He knew that he was keenly watched through those first days, knew that this woman of the snow-white hair and sparkling eyes was ever mindful of him. But though he felt her thought, yet he felt it as a stimulus, a beneficent influence conducive to calm activity. And he was grateful. He lived apart from her, but always subject to her call. He prepared his own meals in his tiny apartment, and alone had the care of his household menage. But at times she visited him, often she surprised him, climbing the stairs to his little home with astonishing agility and dropping in on him without warning. Frequently she discovered him in moments of embarrassing struggle with cookery, of which he had not had the slightest knowledge heretofore. Then she would seize the skillets and pans from before him, and in a trice would whip together concoctions that subsequently astonished him with their palatableness. And often she would sit with him at his table, and laugh with and at him, now bantering gently, now encouraging him to wider endeavor in the work in hand, always lifting his thought to higher, brighter levels, yet never questioning, never alluding to the past, never mentioning other mutual acquaintances than Marian—and with only an infrequent and casual reference to her—and never voicing aught of her own history or her life-activities. The self-recrimination that her profound consideration roused in Alden's soul caused him hours of effort to eject: the ignorant tool of evil that in days past had opposed her in

his name was not the man who now breathed forth hourly his deep gratitude that he had been drawn into the radius of her beneficent thought.

A month passed—so swiftly, so calmly, that he started in surprise when she again handed him his wages in advance. He had driven for her daily in the warm spring sunlight. Often on these drives he had seen former associates, and always he had bowed, although they seldom acknowledged his salute, but generally turned and watched him with a derisive smile. Often he had taken his charge to humble homes, in the outskirts of the city. Frequently he had driven with her into the dark places of Greater New York, where the sun seldom shone; yet he knew by signs infallible that she took the sunlight with her, and left it in manifestations that brought a lump into his throat and tears to his eyes. . .

He knew, as he now humbly served her, that she was demonstrating the Christ, silently, and in the turmoil of a world at war. He knew that amid the revilings and persecution to which he and his associates had in days past subjected her, she had been steadily demonstrating the Christ. And the thought of his former unrighteous judgment of her made him hang his head. . .

And yet he knew that a present acknowledgment of the reality of past evil would but give permanence to that of which he must rid his mentality if he would demonstrate Israel. To turn back to examine the footprints of error is but to deepen them. To know in Truth that evil is untrue, never really causative, is to obliterate it and all its asserted effects. He could not continue to bear the scars of past unreality if he would demonstrate the eternal, harmonious NOW.

And so, while the month had been one of quiet activity in this ark of safety, it had not been that false, destructive sense of rest which mortals crave, when idle, uncoördinated, unassorted thoughts are permitted to float in and out of mind's unguarded portals like droning gnats in the hazy sunlight of a summer noon, but, rather, that vigorous, constructive thinking in the direction of universal good that is a reflection of the intelligence of the eternal creative Mind. It was the sort of thinking that must eventually prove that error has no power of action; that the ignorant thinking of selfish mortals is impotent to hinder the consummation of a divine purpose such as was seeking externalization through him. He had been cast out of St. Jude's; but even Jesus had gone as a prophet to his native Nazareth and been driven forth. And yet the Master demonstrated the Christ even to those who stoned him. And Alden could do no less than emulate the divine example.

In his present employment Alden felt no sense of chagrin, but rather an unbounded thankfulness. As chauffeur for this woman he was no less about his "Father's business" than were those who conducted the affairs of the nation, for business, the world must learn, is real *only as it becomes metaphysical.* Principle, he knew, places man in his proper sphere of usefulness: in the demonstration of Israel there is no lack of place or employment, and the employer is always God. Thought of material results entered not into his activity: it was for him to know that when work is done in accordance with Principle the laborer receives just compensation. True, he was practicing rigid economy; yet he did so in the knowledge that true economy is economy—the righteous management—of thought. The activity of his thinking included no gratification of personal ambition, no desire for competitive supremacy in trade, no avaricious conquest of others in business, in political, or social affairs. He was awake to the workings of the enemy of Truth—the lie of personal sense, that "man-killer" from the beginning—and he would strive to awaken his fellow men from their apathy and insensibility to the danger that threatened them from their own carnal thinking. To this end he had taken the course nearest the right as revealed to him by Principle. Ruled by right thinking, he knew that outward conditions would change harmoniously to conform to his thought.

Sheltered from his persecutors, and with the needs of the moment met, Alden found opportunity to analyze the succession of events which had seemingly conduced to his present situation. And always his mental work led to the further uncovering of an ever deeper malicious animus, and always manifested through a single personality. The profound depths of the evil at length lay revealed to his delving thought. . .

And he shrank back from it appalled! For there in the carnal slime he saw that which had driven him into the hell of war into which it had first plunged a sleeping world. He saw in the mortal muck the animus of Barach's deadly deed. He saw in the rottenness of human thinking the lusting evil that had slain his mother, robbed him of his earthly all, ruined Ethel, befouled his name, and now would condemn his mentality to gibbering idiocy. He saw the mentalities of a hundred million people—nay, of a world!—lying fallow to this carnal animus that manipulated them through their educated beliefs and fears. He saw it all. Saw, too, that it was more than the enslavement of the human mind that was aimed at, more than the disintegration of empires and the overthrow of civilization: it was—even as Marian had pointed out to unseeing eyes—*the destruction of the Word!*

Under the urgency of the revelation Alden sought Madam Galuth. And as he stood before her he felt that she had been expecting just this. "I must leave you," he said. And she evinced no surprise, but answered gently: "Yes, when it is right."

"I have a work to do," he urged.

"You are a splendid chauffeur, Alden," she returned quietly, and with apparent irrelevance. "Faithful in little, you have overcome much. Your demonstration will increase."

"That is it," he said eagerly, "I must demonstrate Israel."

She waved him to a chair and sat down before him. As he looked into her calm face he felt that she was the impersonation of youth and love—yet not youth as the world knows it, but, rather, youthful maturity, as if she stood immovable at manhood's noon; and not human love, but that marvelous miracle-working essence which is the reflection of the divine Consideration whom Jesus knew as the "Father".

"And do you know what it means to demonstrate Israel?" she asked earnestly. "It is to prove that you are not material; it is to prove that you are the spiritual son, the image, reflection, manifestation of the infinite EL who is Principle, Truth, Life, Mind, Love, Spirit, Soul—the infinite Wholeness expressed by the complete numeral seven in these synonymous terms. It is to prove the allness of God, and the nothingness of God's counterpart, error, as expressed to mortals in the material creation and the evils, diseases, horrors that proceed from matter and its false laws.

"They rejected you in St. Jude's that night," she continued after a pause, "because error was roused by your message. It is always so: error is so readily provoked, so resentful when disturbed, so desirous of being let alone. It hates the light, because it is supersensitive and suspicious. It hates comparison with Truth, for it looks upon goodness as merely negative, as weakness, while evil it regards as strength. It shrinks from Truth, for Truth alone can destroy it."

She paused again and smiled up at him. Then she resumed. "I did not know you before you went to the war. But I do know that you are not the man you seemed to be then. The present manifestation is vastly better, is it not? It is this sort of manifestation that the present hour must develop. The world needs prophets, as never before; it needs men of vast courage—men of Abraham's type—to restore and keep alive the ideals of the Christ; it needs men of deep insight and strong leadership. It needs *you*."

"That is why I have come to you. . ."

"That is why you must remain with me. Were you to

sally forth against that massed evil now, you would be overwhelmed."

"But Doctor Roake is destroying them, body and soul!"

She held up a hand. "The sin is the only sinner," she said quietly. "And we will deal with it impersonally. Did not Marian teach you this?"

He started and made as if to voice the question that as yet he had not been able to ask. But she restrained him. "Marian is now in Persia," she continued. Again he started, again checked an exclamation. "Her mission there is for the Word, as is yours here. . . But your hour is not yet come," she hurried to add. "Crestelridge will have no more of you than it would of her. The mills are yet grinding. Judgment is being laid to the line. Meantime, you have been acquiring that knowledge of the nature of error and its workings which is essential in order that you may meet it with your understanding of Truth. But have you reached Paul's status, where he rejoiced in the opportunities afforded by affliction?

"For when your call comes you will find the lions of entrenched evil roaring in your pathway. Autocracy will not die on the battlefields of Europe. Oh, no! For autocracy is innate in the human mind. The fate of kingly autocracy may be decided in Flanders, but I think the future of religious autocracy will be decided right here. And here will be determined the fate of that unholy union of religion and medicine, that tower of Babel, which our politicians are now so busily setting up. The world war is a conflict between spiritual and material forces. It typifies Armageddon. England, as Ephraim, has called in her distress to Manasseh, for her idols of matter are broken and falling. America, as Manasseh, is responding. But the graven images of Manasseh must likewise fall, ere the defective material vision of Israel shall be cured. Then shall she see herself the spiritual heir of the infinite Father, and war shall be no more. To Marian has been granted the recognition of spiritual Israel. To you, Alden . . ."

She hesitated, and sat for a moment looking at him. "I have heard the rumor, Alden," she resumed in a low tone, "that you have returned from the dead. I think you have, and that to you has been granted the recognition of the nothingness of death. The world is being pushed up to such recognition. Each succeeding war grows more horrible, more terribly destructive, more lingering in its disintegrating after-effects. In the next war whole communities, armies, entire cities, will be wiped out, as mortals develop their false material science which is proving their destruction. And so mankind *must* meet death and overcome it, not yield to it in supine resignation as the theologians

do, nor seek futilely to ward it off with material elixirs and serums, as do the physicians, but must meet it in the realm of thought, whence it has its origin and wherein it works. And nothing but the true science which Jesus taught and demonstrated will destroy it."

"And it is this true science of Christianity that I must reveal to these lost people!"

"Abide with me yet a little while, Alden," she counseled. "You need these days of preparation, while we are waiting for word from Marian."

"Word . . . from . . . Marian!" he exclaimed, his eyes again big with wonder.

"Yes, for you are now working with her to demonstrate Israel."

CHAPTER 15

IT was not by design that Alden Cragg was permitted to remain undisturbed during those first weeks of his inexplicable association with Madam Galuth. Dr. Jeremiah Roake, long internationally known and admired for his professional audacity, and now garnering fresh laurels by reason of his unique humanitarian plan of effecting world-salvation through world-health, had manifested a strange reluctance in regard to dealing with this woman. It was to the wondering rector as if the doctor actually feared her possession of something intangible, invisible, the potency of which he dared not put to the test of demonstration. The doctor had been slow to credit the rector's report that Alden was with this woman, for, of all contingencies, this had not occurred to him as a possibility. And because of it, an *impasse* was now created.

For while, strangely enough, the rector could not induce the doctor to act against the woman, nevertheless the rector himself strenuously combatted the doctor's proposal to hale Alden before a lunacy commission. "On what grounds would you base the charge of insanity?" he anxiously urged. And when the doctor explained that the young man's aberration took the form of religious mania, the rector threw up his hands in protesting horror. Were Alden to be tried on *such* a count, what exposures might not result! And what dangers might not accrue to the foundations on which St. Jude's was reared! It was not to be considered!

On the other hand, Mrs. Whittier was daily urging the rector from her Florida retreat to procure a declaration of Alden's incompetency and a transfer of the Cragg estate to his

wife. But no favor was accorded this proposal by either the rector or the doctor, though for reasons that neither could make public. As to a divorce, Mrs. Whittier wrote her distraught husband that Ethel had frequently hinted it, but that, until the Penberry and Cragg prospects should be definitely determined, *this* was unthinkable. And in the judgment of his wife the rector fully concurred.

"But . . . Oh, the chagrin of having my son-in-law a . . . a mere *chauffeur!*" the rector groaned, echoing his wife's sore lamentation. "That Galuth woman has hypnotized him! Oh, if Doctor Roake would but use his power to have her expelled from Crestelridge! But he . . . he really appears to fear her! It is incomprehensible!"

Thus was a fresh worry developed in the rector's troubled soul, and one that, paradoxically, bound him still more closely to the man whom he had begun to distrust and was now beginning to fear, Doctor Roake. Alas! what a welter had life become in these few short months. And what of the future? The prospect terrified him, and caused him to spend long hours on his knees in fervent prayer.

Then he contrived to discover Alden alone in the car while waiting on a down-town corner for Madam Galuth. "If you *must* be a chauffeur, Alden," he protested, "come and be mine. I will employ you and give you a home. Let us end this absurdity and stop the gossips' tongues!"

But Alden refused, though kindly. And the rector, in his anger born of black fear, denounced the woman and vehemently voiced his resolve to drive her from the city. . .

The incident afforded an impulsion to seek Doctor Roake again. And, contrary to his punctilious observance of etiquette, the anxious rector brushed aside the page and hurried straight to the doctor's sanctum and threw wide the door.

But on the threshold he halted and stood with bulging eyes. For there before him sat the doctor and Senator Chaddock, the latter settled into his chair like a swollen toad, with head hanging, eyes closed, and mentality dormant under an invisible influence that appeared to emanate from the doctor's black eyes that were fixed piercingly upon him.

For a moment the rector hung before the startling scene; then the doctor turned his head and threw upon the gaping clergyman such a look as the reverend man had never beheld in a human countenance. He fell back before it; but it passed quickly, and the doctor rose and, with a gesture enjoining silence, motioned him to enter and be seated.

"Our friend dropped asleep while I was talking to him," the doctor elucidated, regarding the rector fixedly. "It is a habit

that appears to be growing upon him, making it very annoying to me when we have business to transact."

The rector's eyes wandered from the doctor to the dozing man and back again. The doctor followed the rector's gaze, and his face darkened. The atmosphere seemed suddenly stifling, and the rector paled and turned away. The doctor approached and took his arm. "It's your old trouble," he suggested in a low, serious tone. "I advised you to have treatment for it some weeks ago, but you delayed. Come to my diagnosis room; I want to examine you."

The rector drew back. "No, Doctor," he protested; "it is passing. . . I do not wish an examination."

"But I insist," said the doctor firmly. "If you refuse to submit to it here, you will force me to invoke the Wess law and have you examined in your home. For I consider your condition serious. . ." And the rector submitted.

But had the unwitting rector anticipated the result of his visit to Doctor Roake he would have carried his problems to Principle, rather than to human personality, which is the veil of the flesh. And thereby his soul would have avoided an additional burden of sorrow. "I must explain," the doctor adumbrated during the examination, "that wars usually develop serious epidemics. I do not expect this war to prove an exception, but, rather, because of its enormity, to give rise to an epidemic of appalling proportions. And the epidemic will break out where least suspected. Therefore you must indulge my eagerness to detect it and meet it in its incipience. I am constrained to believe that Senator Chaddock is developing something akin to the 'sleeping sickness'; and I . . ." He paused to note the effect. Then: "Ah, your face twitches, your eyelids droop! You feel an inclination to drowsiness, an increasing tendency, a deep lassitude amounting to faintness, with nausea, giddiness, and extreme weakness! You have periods of depression, melancholia, unformed fear, do you not? Just so! It would be wise to send you to a hospital for a few weeks. . ."

"Doctor!" gasped the frightened rector, shrinking back, "don't, I beg of you!"

"Well, we'll see. We'll watch the case carefully. Report to me to-morrow. I shall insist on seeing you daily now. Take care of yourself. And, above all, don't worry." And then he turned the conversation upon other topics less distressing, and ultimately dismissed the cowering rector without so much as a word from him regarding his errand, but with a fund of additional information derived from him confirmatory of the deductions which the doctor had already made in regard to Ethel as based on Harris Chaddock's conduct and words.

"Yes," the doctor repeated aloud to himself when alone, "a great epidemic will emerge from this war. And it will be mental in origin. It will confirm my premise that what the world calls evil thought is more powerful than that which it calls good, for it will carry the anæsthesia of death. But who shall say that death is evil? For good and evil are but relative terms, and death is ultimately a benefaction. . ."

To the doctor, sitting in the plenitude of material success amid the vast activities which he now controlled, the dominating factor in human affairs, whether for good or evil, was demonstrably suggestion, and he could have cited indubitable proof thereof. "He is a fool who resorts to physical force," he was wont to reflect often, when the lust for power was driving him most fiercely. "Thought is omnipotent. And he who controls it determines life itself."

In this connection he reflected, after the rector's call, on his mental activities directed of late toward Ethel—a frequent reflection, and one that always stirred his risibles. It was fortunate, indeed, he mused, that the situation had been so fully revealed to him by the unwitting Harris, for that Ethel should have a child, an heir, was a contingency that did not fit into the doctor's plans. And the doctor's knowledge of the delicate situation, with its varied concomitants, placed in his grasp an additional power that amounted to domination over those concerned in it. "Harris has committed suicide;" he laughed. "The Wess law has proved unexpectedly latitudinous in his case, at least." And again he laughed as he studied the tip of his cigar. "But," and he became serious, "I wonder if Alden knew of her condition. I wonder." And then, as his thought turned about Alden, it touched upon Marian, and upon that still unexplained "something" which he was certain had happened to Alden "over there."

And there were other happenings "over there" that the doctor would have given much to discover. He had wondered often since Alden's return if that mysterious occurrence in which the youth had been concerned had also involved Otto Hoeffel, whose silence had become so inexplicable. True, the spring drive of the Germans in France had gone forward with such terrific loss of life that Otto might have been summoned away from the now hopeless campaign in Palestine. But that did not explain his continued silence; and the dark suspicion developed in the doctor's thought that Otto had been false, had tricked him, and that, though he held all the cards in his own hand, still he lacked the one essential to the game—and that one was Marian Whittier. . .

Thus the weeks passed, and spring flowered into summer.

Then Crestelridge society succumbed to the pagan influence of the season and fluttered away to mountains and seashore, where golf and bathing, motoring and feasting, were invoked to divert thought from the annoying world-cataclysm and shield its gaze from the horrors enacted on the other side. Few remarked the fact that Alden Cragg would not accompany them this year as of yore, and those who did laughed lightly, and some shrugged their shoulders or lifted their brows, and some passed a banal joke. Doctor Roake of course must remain behind to guard society's portals against the ever-threatened invasion of disease. Harris Chaddock had previously gone for a week-end to the resort where Ethel was staying, and would have repeated it, but for the interference of Fay Meuse, to whom, during Ethel's absence, he had been devoted—to such an extent, indeed, that even the most calloused of society's mentors had felt it incumbent upon them to proffer him cautionary advice. . . "But of course," the superfluously rich Mrs. Dodd extenuated, "he's only trying to forget his pique over Ethel's not marrying him." And this tolerant view became quite generally adopted.

The rector sighed audibly when he had concluded his detailed instructions to his assistant and shifted St. Jude's affairs to the younger man's shoulders for the summer. St. Jude's must remain open during the heated term, though its tired rector would be away on a greatly needed vacation; for, with the departure of the Telluses, Blacks, and Kerls, figures unfamiliar to these would emerge from the stifling lanes and byways and creep, panting and curious, into St. Jude's cool, dark nave. And while on hot Sunday mornings the former would lounge over velvety golf links, or droop about wide, shaded verandas, with icy liquids and heaps of diverting periodicals at hand, these less favored ones—though still sons of God, the rector would have to admit—would sit in the pews of the mighty, wide-eyed before the spiritual thaumaturgy, dull-eared before the droning ritual, wondering what it was all about, yet grateful for the respite from the persecuting sun that this curious medley of pagan worship afforded them. The sermons of the new assistant rector, Ellory Sten, would be indefinite—these creatures were glad, for they would not have to think; but they would be brief—and that worked a hardship, for the sun was relentless. . .

But the rector's plans for an extended vacation did not become externalized, despite his feverish prayers, for, even as he was packing his golf sticks, came a message from Mrs. Whittier, summoning him to Florida: Ethel was seriously ill.

The rector dropped his unpacked impedimenta and sank groaning under the new affliction. Then he rose and wildly

telephoned to Doctor Roake. The doctor, he learned, had received a similar message, but, being unable to leave immediately, had directed Harris Chaddock to precede him.

A third telegram went to Alden Cragg, in care of Madam Galuth—but it was sent by Ethel's doctor, and against her own and her mother's protests. "Go, Alden," Madam Galuth said, as she pressed a sum of money into his hands. "It is you whom she needs now."

And shortly thereafter, while Doctor Roake was communicating hourly by wire with Ethel's physician, the "Florida Special" tore through the misty night, bearing father, husband, and lover to this moaning victim of the vast delusion that life and intelligence dwell in matter.

CHAPTER 16

THE rector had picked up Harris on his way to the "local" that would take them into the metropolis and had stopped for a brief consultation with Doctor Roake, who had come down to his office for that purpose. "You must follow soon, Doctor!" the distressed father had urged. "You must not let her die!" And the doctor, while giving consoling assurances, had lifted his shoulders in contempt of the man who could preach so eloquently of a God of infinite goodness in Whom he had no confidence himself.

"They did not state what her illness is," the rector recalled quaveringly to Harris, while rushing to the train, "whether functional or organic. . . The dear child looked so well when she left us. . . Brooding over her unfortunate marriage, no doubt. . . Chagrin and . . . Oh, it is terrible!"

As he stumbled up the steps and into the Pullman in the New York depot he prayed incessantly. He had never failed in consolation for others—but death had never come home to him before, and the afflictions of his fellow men now seemed so small as compared with his own. The piercing thought stabbed him that God does not pity human afflictions: Marian, he now recalled, had said that eyes too pure to behold evil could not look upon mortal suffering as real. And this awful thought smote him—nay, it cleft an infinite gulf between him and his Maker and left him helpless, abandoned, terrified, in the chill of a limitless void.

"But why, oh, why did they not inform us of the nature of her illness?" he kept repeating.

He sank into a vacant seat while waiting for the porter to

make up his berth—how those narrow beds did resemble coffins! With the heavy curtains before them they became tombs, black, stifling! He shuddered and tore open the collar at his throat. He called to the porter and had a window raised. But the sallow lights that flickered past the rushing train were spectral things portending death. . .

What if he should find his daughter dead! Could he go to her side with the Master's exact and scientific knowledge of God and say: *"Talitha cumi"?* He knew he could not. And he knew—though he would not have confessed it—that it was for very lack of spiritual growth. Such growth had long since been stunted by disobedience to his Principle, God.

But all had sinned equally! . . . No, for, if history speak truth, the early Christians had raised the dead! Why not, indeed, if they demonstrated the Christ? But the death-destroying teachings of the unique Master had been quickly swallowed up in a midnight of wrong thinking; then the Dark Ages of matter and its horrors settled upon the minds of men. And in the midst of his present suffering the rector wondered if that black event were now being re-enacted, if Christianity were being again engulfed in a maw of worldly politics, even the political machinations of the Roake utilitarian plan. . .

Harris Chaddock came to his side. "I've been through the train," he said in a low tone. "Alden Cragg's in a day coach up ahead. . ."

Throughout that night, amid the roar and confusion of matter's shifting symbols, Alden sat alone. Thus had sat the girl at his bedside in Antonia's Tower, nor would yield a moiety to evil's claims. In the luxurious Pullman behind him the incarnations of mortal mind's denial of God were rushing in the garments of theology and medicine to cope with a power that they deemed irresistible. But Alden knew it not, for he had not seen Harris when the latter had entered the day coach. And while these fitfully slept, he watched.

Three months had passed since Ethel had left him. In that time he had received no word from her. Yet each month he had sent her his wages; each month he had renewed his offer to make her a home when she should return, and to protect her, shield her, and help her to rise from the dust. These months had brought him trials demanding proofs, not the least of which was this union with Ethel, wherein she had employed his great sacrifice as a shield behind which to continue, uninterrupted, her worldly existence. He had hoped that, under its beneficent protection, she would turn and toil upward on the ladder of gratitude. That hope had been sorely buffeted, yet it stood. And it grew now with his belief that this dark hour of her bitter

experience would witness the reversal of her chartless course. For she was attempting the futile task of steering her bark from a compass point outside of Principle, unaware that such a point did not, could not, exist.

These months had brought him deep lessons from Madam Galuth, and he marveled now at the world's misunderstanding of this remarkable woman. Yet he knew that until he had jettisoned his former beliefs he had held her in the same unreasoning contempt, demanding a sign and scoffing at the only one proffered him, that of the prophet Jonah. Then had he sunk into the sea of error; then was he swallowed by the hideous tannin. But the monster had disgorged him at the command of the Christ—yet only when he had become obedient to his Principle, God.

He had emerged shorn close of materiality; and because of his spiritual rebirth—in a degree from a conception immaculate—he was now enabled to do works far above those of his fellows. Thus, in a greater degree, his Master. And these works had appeared in demonstrations of increasing magnitude during these months with Madam Galuth, until the day came when she could go to him, her wonderful face glowing with the inner light, and say: "Your God is real to you, Alden, and you will stand!"

Morning discovered him still watching. Then the train arrived at its destination, and he descended. Down the platform he descried the rector and Harris Chaddock, waiting. "Did they send for you?" the rector addressed him, manifesting sore agitation. And, as Alden nodded an affirmative: "Is it so bad as that? God forbid! But have you any further news?"

"Only that which is good," Alden replied quietly.

The rector appeared measurably reassured. "Why did you not come to us last evening?" he chided querulously. "But we shall speak of that later. I have sent a porter ahead to secure a cab."

Alden did not ask why they, having thus revealed their knowledge of his presence on the train, had not sought him. The rector cast an occasional quizzical sidelong look at him as they hurried on; Harris had ignored him quite.

"Doctor Rowley has the case," the rector resumed brokenly, after they were seated in the cab. "I know nothing about him. . . You have said you didn't, Harris? . . . I trust he is skillful. . . Pray God, Doctor Roake may not be delayed!" . . .

Mrs. Whittier met them at the door of the luxurious apartment, met them in piteous confusion, embarrassment, and copious tears. "Oh, Wilson," she sobbed, throwing herself into her husband's shaking arms, "it is all over with us!"

"Have courage, dear, have courage," the rector uttered with

quivering lips. "The Lord giveth, the Lord taketh away. Blessed be . . . What is it that has come upon her so suddenly?"

Mrs. Whittier did not reply, but, without having acknowledged the presence of either Alden or Harris, turned and led the way into the living room. A gentleman of professional appearance was at that moment stepping softly from a doorway. A nurse carefully closed the door behind him. "I am Doctor Rowley," he announced, coming forward. "You are the father and husband, I presume. And . . ." He stopped abruptly and stood, with the unfinished sentence on his parted lips, staring at Alden.

"This . . . this is Doctor Harris Chaddock," stammered the rector, presenting Harris. "He is our physician. . ."

"Take me to her," said Harris, without acknowledging the introduction.

Doctor Rowley stepped back and regarded Harris with surprise. "I . . . I would suggest that you . . . wait," he objected. "She should not be disturbed just now."

"Then she is living!" exclaimed the rector hysterically. "Tell us, Doctor, what is her malady?"

"Wilson!" broke from Mrs. Whittier in a voice of terror. And she turned upon the startled rector.

Doctor Rowley looked from one to another blankly. "Why, surely you know that she . . ."

"Doctor!" Mrs. Whittier almost shrieked it, and staggered toward him.

Harris Chaddock, his face now ghastly white, seized the doctor's arm. "Let me have a word with you!" he cried excitedly, trying to draw the doctor away. "I have been brought down to take this case! I represent Doctor Roake! I have been her physician in Crestelridge! Father Whittier wishes me to have charge now! Let us go to her. . ."

"Stop!"

Harris wheeled sharply at the sound and halted. His mouth opened, and an ugly look leaped into his ashen face. The eyes of the others flashed upon Alden. "Doctor Rowley," said Alden, his voice coming clear and steady, "I am the patient's husband. Has the child been born yet?"

"Child!" The rector gasped out the word, tottered a few steps, and fell heavily into a chair. Mrs. Whittier shivered, as under a galvanic shock, and became rigid. Harris leaped at Alden, hands clenched and mouth working, but stopped, crouching before him like a hyena at bay. Doctor Rowley stood dumfounded.

Then, with a quivering groan, Mrs. Whittier dropped fainting to the floor. Alden brushed Harris aside and sprang to

the fallen woman. With Doctor Rowley's assistance she was lifted to a sofa and restored. A maid was hurriedly summoned, and the exhausted woman, worn with the burden of her dread secret, emaciated by its long and incessant gnawing, was borne to her room, followed by the crushed and weeping rector.

Harris Chaddock remained behind. Recovering from his confusion, he glanced about furtively. Taking advantage of the others' absence, he crept to the door of the sick chamber. For some moments he stood hesitant. Then he muttered an oath, shrugged his shoulders, and laid his hand upon the knob.

But as he did so he felt himself seized and pulled sharply back to the center of the room, where he spun dizzily for a moment and slipped to his knees. Springing up, panting with rage, he faced Alden.

As they stood before each other, Alden towering white and glowing over the surprised and baffled Harris, Doctor Rowley returned. Alden turned to him. "Doctor," he said, "I have taken charge here, as is my right. I request that you remain on the case. Doctor Chaddock will have nothing to do with it. I ask again, has the child been born?"

The doctor looked questioningly from Alden to Harris. "Yes," he replied hesitatingly, his eyes riveted upon Alden, "it was born this morning—dead."

A gasp burst from Harris: it was the gasp of the coolie when the burden is lifted from his back. His rigidity left him, and he appeared to shrink together. He turned away, shaken and perspiring, and dropped into a chair.

"And the mother?" Alden asked steadily.

The doctor's head sank. "The little mother," he said in a low tone, "is following her babe."

Harris gripped the arms of his chair and struggled to his feet. "I'm going in there!" he cried hoarsely.

Alden sprang in front of him and barred the way. "That in which you were solely concerned, the babe, is dead," he said in a low, cold voice, so low that only Harris heard. "You have no further interest in that room. If your shame will permit you to remain here, then remember that you are in this apartment on suffrance. If you open the door of my wife's room I will put you into the street."

Harris gave back, gaping. Had his senses deceived him? *This* was not Alden Cragg, this tall, white creature that seemed to repel him with a force unnatural! *This* was not the "little soldier-boy" who had so meekly accepted his shameful insults a year ago! This was a spectral thing; it was inhuman, resembling nothing so much as a disinterred corpse! . . .

He shuddered and glanced back toward the exit. Then he broke into a quavering laugh and turned to the doctor. "He . . . he's off . . . up here!" he said unevenly, forcing the reluctant speech from his lips and placing a trembling finger on his forehead. "They've declared him insane in Crestelridge!"

Doctor Rowley glanced sharply at Alden, then back again at Harris. "Your conduct, gentlemen, is puzzling," he said slowly. "But I cannot become involved in your personal affairs. Mrs. Cragg's condition is very grave. I must not leave the case until assured that it passes into proper hands. The patient is not able to render responsible judgment now; therefore I must look to Mr. Cragg for instruction."

"But he's insane, I tell you!" cried Harris, purpling with anger.

"I will have to judge as to that," the doctor replied calmly. "And now, Mr. Cragg," addressing Alden, "if you will request Doctor Chaddock to leave us for a few minutes, I would like to talk with you."

For a moment Harris glared wildly, uncomprehendingly, at the two. For a moment he met the unnatural look in Alden's eyes. But he could not sustain the steady gaze. His averted face flushed with chagrin, it paled with fear. He wheeled again upon Alden, desperately; but his spirits seemed suddenly to wither, and he turned and moved slowly to a window. Halting, he glanced back over his shoulder at Alden. A resurgence of rage tore him, and hot tears of mortification filled his eyes. "I'll be back . . . later!" he blurted in a choking voice. "I'll have a word with you then, Cragg!" And he left the apartment.

CHAPTER 17

THE assizes of God hold session perpetual, for God is Principle, time is the counterpart of the eternal Present, and place is Spirit infinite. True Man, God's image, lives not in dust, but includes within him the spiritual idea of Universe, proceeding from the infinite Mind that ever embraces it and him. Man thinks not, but reflects the thoughts of Mind. The activity of these evolves the spiritual consciousness which is his Life. 'Gainst this, the assaults of death are vain.

In the unsubstantial realm of error the communal mortal mind holds shadowy sway. Yet it is but the suppositional opposite of the infinite Real. The clattering activities of its pseudo-thoughts produce a false consciousness—laughably absurd!—of a spinning globe and a man of flesh clinging upon it. Fanci-

ful concept! A filmy bubble that vanishes, when pricked by the dart of death, into its native nothingness.

Well for the world that the Man of Sorrows, in his ascension out of matter, proved its unreality! Well that through the clouded ages some few have touched the spiritual robe and turned from creed to magnify the Christ!—else Ethel Whittier had sunk, beneath the accumulation of her false thinking, into a stratum of consciousness more terrifying than the one she now so wildly clutched and held, with loosening grasp, as life.

In her conscious moments, before Alden had been summoned, death had filled her empty soul with concentrated terror. "I can't die! I can't! I *can't!*" she had shrieked, when the chill shadow crept upon her. "Doctor . . . don't let me die! . . . Mother, wire Doctor Roake! . . . Do something! . . . *Do* something! . . . Hold me! . . . Hold me! . . . I'm going! . . . *going!* . . ."

Then, when delirium spread chaos through her burning thought-processes, she dwelt continually in that baleful hour when Harris Chaddock struck down the barriers with the authority invested in him by the Wess law and thrust himself into her presence through the "strictly legal procedure" so carnally suggested by the astute Doctor Roake. And her near-crazed mother had sat in dumb horror, watching the daughter die, yet not daring to summon the rector or Doctor Roake, lest the girl's foul secret become the scandal-monger's tid-bit, and the proud Whittier name be trailed through the gutters of Crestelridge. Mrs. Whittier had not been apprised of Ethel's condition until after their arrival in Florida. She had rejoiced on learning it, not knowing then how close was the consummation. But suspicion soon took root. A sick spell shortly thereafter threw the girl into slight delirium. In its wake came the revelation, a fulsome revelation that prostrated the horrified mother with a month's sharp illness, knowledge of which she and Ethel fearfully hid from the rector for depth of shame.

Then, when Mrs. Whittier had wearily risen from her bed of suffering, weak and shaken, she had frenziedly conspired with the cowering girl to cover the error deep, hoping wildly, praying frantically, contriving feverishly, on the forlorn hazard that fortuitous circumstances might arise to save them all. . .

But the case developed peculiar pathological aspects, and Doctor Rowley, himself wholly unsuspecting, became at length quite baffled. He suggested a council; but, to his surprise, was strenuously opposed by mother and daughter. Later, against equally stubborn opposition, he urgently advised sending for their family physician. Finally, in desperation, as he saw the girl slipping into the shadows, he demanded, with the threat

of invoking police power, that her husband be summoned forthwith. . .

Alden stood, with Doctor Rowley, at the bedside of the girl, who now lay quiet under the opiate's mesmeric spell in the darkened room. "Thy sins be forgiven thee," he breathed. For he knew that to condemn this mistaught child was of itself deepest sin. The human sense of vision, calling itself his, was not beholding the work of God, for to view matter with the physical senses is but to see their deceptive testimony objectified. In her misguided pursuit of the evil which had allured her in the guise of good, this girl had pitiably missed the mark. And "the uttermost farthing" she was now paying—death.

In an adjoining chamber, beside the couch on which lay his moaning wife, the rector knelt in anguished lamentation. "Woe unto me," he sobbed aloud; "for these be the days of vengeance! Woe unto them that are with child, woe unto them that give suck in these, the last days! Ah, if the goodman of the house had known in what hour the thief would come! Ah, had I not run to and fro on the earth, neglecting my child! Woe, woe unto me, for these be indeed the last days!". . .

"Mr. Cragg," said Doctor Rowley gravely, "what I wish to say to you is that, had I not had this case from the date of your wife's arrival here, I should be suspicious. I have pursued the most modern scientific methods of treatment. My reputation and past achievements are open to investigation. I have earnestly striven to heal her—but I have failed. I tried to call in counsel, but . . ."

"You have conscientiously done all that you could, Doctor," said Alden, "and I am grateful to you. May I ask what you suspect?"

The doctor delayed reply. "It is an ugly charge—and I make none that is specific," he at length answered. "But I suspect—malpractice. Yet just how or of what sort, I am at a loss to say."

"Your suspicion is justified," Alden returned without hesitation. "There has been manipulation; but it has not been physical."

"Not physical? What then?"

"Wholly mental."

The doctor threw him a questioning glance. "You are . . . sure?"

"Yes."

"And you knew?"

"Yes," was the quiet answer. Then, after a long silence, in which the doctor stood studying the white-haired, brief-spoken man beside him, Alden asked: "Have you done all that you can?"

"I . . . I am reluctant to tell you, Mr. Cragg, but . . . I fear we can do nothing now but keep her under opiates . . . till she passes out."

"Then may we leave her with God?"

It was an odd question—an absurd one, in these days of denial of God—and the doctor started and again looked sharply at the speaker. And as he looked, he felt a return, an intensifying, of that peculiar impress which Alden had produced upon him when first they met that morning. Harris Chaddock's accusation surged up in his memory; but the doctor dismissed it before the rapidly deepening conviction that he was standing now in the presence of a man of experiences rare, vivid, and broadening, whose outlook upon life was from a focal point far advanced beyond that of the myopic masses. The appearance of the man was—the doctor found but one word to describe it—unearthly. The impression which he made was of powers strongly psychic. And the doctor felt strangely awed before him, strangely moved in the mental aura that seemed to surround him.

He drew out his watch. "Mrs. Cragg will remain under the opiate for some time. I have another call to make. I can return in an hour . . . Or do you wish me to retire from the case?" He knew not just why he put the question. He wondered if it had to do with Harris Chaddock.

Alden's hand went out and rested on the doctor's shoulder. "Come back," he said gently. "I want you." And the doctor bowed and went away, with a great, awed wonder sitting at the portals of his mind.

And throughout the call that he made the wonder remained there, challenging every entering thought. What manner of man was this, who, either through callousness or religious fanaticism, had abandoned his dying wife to the unknown God? But the doctor, broad-minded and great of heart, a sympathetic servitor of his fellow sufferers, and himself a humble searcher after Truth, laughed at the absurd and intolerant suggestion.

And then he became grave before the thought of Ethel and the awful recurrent mystery of life and death. He was not an adherent of the prevalent theories of medication. He strove only to set the delicate mechanism of the human body aright and remove the obstacles which he believed to be hindering Nature's healing work. "We doctors never heal," he was wont to insist. "Nature does it all." But to push his inquiries beyond the purely physical into the unexplored realm of metaphysics, to discover why Nature should require the aid of frail man, was a venture from which he shrank through want of confidence in his own powers. In his studies he had pursued

evolution back to protoplasm, and had advanced pathology to the germ—but there he had halted. That the germ was the cause of disease, or that disease bred the germ, he felt to be still moot. And he hesitated not to voice this honest opinion. . .

Throughout his call he felt the fascination of the white-haired man who had impressed him so vividly, felt it as an urgency that would draw him, despite all else, again to Alden Cragg, and with mental probe and scalpel. And well within the hour he had so disposed of his duties as to enable him to return to the apartment whence emanated this impelling force.

He found the household quiet. His patient slept. Her condition, if unaltered, at least appeared to be no worse. He looked inquiringly at Cragg. "There have been no unfavorable indications?" he asked. And the quiet answer came: "None."

He returned to the living room and seated himself. There was no need of remaining, yet he was loath to go. "I rejoice that our patient holds her own," he said. "The case has been a peculiar one. I could discover no reason why the child should have died. Nor could my assistant, Doctor Means. The parturition was normal. I can find no pathological cause of Mrs. Cragg's present grave condition. I have failed—but why?"

"You have looked for cause in effect," said Alden simply, taking a chair near the doctor.

The doctor looked at him interrogatingly. "You intimated this morning that you considered her condition the result of malpractice," he pursued, "and that mental. Your statement smacks of witchcraft." And he smiled.

"It is witchcraft," said Alden gravely. "Mental sorcery."

"I can almost believe you," the doctor returned, again serious. "For there is no apparent reason why she should die. But," he continued reflectively, "it has always been my contention that there is no reason why the human body should ever die, provided that useless material be eliminated. Perhaps in her case I have not discovered the useless material that requires elimination."

"Does not the human mind's firm belief in death and its necessity constitute the 'useless material' that must be eliminated?" Alden asked.

"Then you would doctor the mind?"

"I would *not* doctor the body, for the body is not a cause, but an effect. Its diseases are likewise but effects. And have not you physicians yourselves demonstrated that treating effects has long since proved useless?"

"You think we do not get at the origin of disease?"

"You do not get at its real origin, for the human mind is

demonstrably the sole cause of all discord. You physicians probe in the body—the effect—for the cause of the disease, which is always in the mind. It is the sick human mind that manifests a sick body. And destruction of the false beliefs constituting this so-called mind alone will destroy disease. Your potions and surgery have not done it and cannot."

"And you regard this terrible thing that we call 'body' as a mere effect?"

"I regard it somewhat as a prominent physical scientist has said: 'a flowing and constantly changing episode in material history, having no more identity than has a river, no identity whatever in its material constitution, but only in its form—identity only in the personal expression or manifestation which is achieved through the agency of fresh and constantly differing sequences of material particles'."

"But what forms it, and out of what?"

"The human mind forms it, and out of matter. But matter is demonstrably a thing of thought—of human thought, which is the suppositional opposite of the real and energizing thought of Mind."

"And that means?" the doctor urged, as Alden paused.

"It is this constantly changing thing of counterfeit thought, known as the human body, that the physicians are forever doctoring and cutting. And in vain, for it is itself merely an effect. Our chemists have analyzed it and discovered that it is mostly water and a few inorganic salts. Yet the physicians treat it as if it were man himself. They regard it as sentient, as containing life and intelligence. They ignore the mental side entirely in treating its diseases; they are oblivious of the stupendous fact that the starting point of matter is never material, but mental, and that mortal mind and body are one."

The doctor regarded Alden for a moment, then leaned toward him, with a hand on his knee. "You said this morning that you needed me. I am wondering if it is not I who needs you. For I have long been doubting the usefulness of my daily toil. Sometimes I consider it utterly profitless."

"Profitless and useless," Alden replied, "if it consists—as it so universally does with doctors—in giving operation to the false laws believed to be perceived through the physical senses. Daily, in their professional round, the doctors move in an atmosphere of dense material thought, constantly centering their thinking and that of their patients upon the human body, looking always for discordant conditions, regarding disease the rule and health the exception, and passing verdicts of disease and inharmony upon their fellow beings that wreak disaster and death among mankind."

"A hard arraignment, Mr. Cragg," said the doctor, smiling; "yet I do not refute it."

"The doctors measure man by material sense," Alden continued. "Yet this is but the matter-man, the dying counterfeit of the Man who is Mind's eternal image. They try to keep it alive, but they can't, for it cannot hold Life nor reflect it. It has been said that the entire world is engaged in the ceaseless occupation of measuring and estimating man with the 'yardstick of physicality'. Are you not even now appraising me by the whiteness of my hair, the lines in my face, the appearance of my body, calling all this 'man', and then setting in motion mortal laws of limitation based thereon that would bring forth results of like kind if I did not protect myself against them by knowing Truth? Mankind are mental manipulators, murderers of their fellow men through ignorance of the fact that the sum total of what is real is Mind and its infinite Idea."

"This then is what you mean by mental malpractice, is it? And you regard it as a dangerous force."

"No. The danger from it lies in the lending of one's thought to it. Of itself, ignorant and malicious thought has no power to strike or attack; but its fearful menace lies in the receptivity to it of those who do not do their own thinking, or do not measure their thinking by Principle. Do not misunderstand me: the mental manipulator is an assassin, though often he comes in the guise and intent of good. His aim is dominion over mankind, and he acquires this through the foulest means, leading to death. He is at enmity with Principle. He is a mortal mind—and that is but ignorance of Truth. But, I repeat, he is dangerous only to those who receive him and permit him to do their thinking. Those who become a law unto themselves and shape their thinking to accord with Principle are protected from his suppositional opposition against right mental activity. For our own safety and progress, therefore, we must each one become his own physician."

"And—may I ask?—you believe Mrs. Cragg to have been receptive to malicious mental suggestion?"

"It may be put that way," Alden replied.

"And the cure of the patient lies in annulling its power? And you know that no physician is able to detect that power and destroy it? Are *you* able to? Tell me, Mr. Cragg—for there is that about you which moves me strongly—are you a healer?"

"No."

The doctor's face expressed perplexity. "You do not represent any of the various healing cults, mental, spiritual, Christian?" he pursued.

"If I did, would you oppose me?"

"No. As a physician it is my business to destroy disease if I can. If I cannot, then my love for my fellow men is such that I welcome any who can do so."

"Then you have not joined those of your profession who have prostituted the holy work of combating disease to the carnal ambition to secure legal control of the people's bodies?"

"You refer to the political doctors? You are opposing their methods, I take it."

"If diseases were being destroyed by these political doctors," said Alden, "there could be no opposition to their methods; and, of course, in that case there would be no need of legislation to give them exclusive powers over humanity. But the world is to-day no nearer being healed of its diseases by *materia medica* than it was a thousand years ago. After centuries of experimentation, new diseases are still following every invention of new remedies. The sure-cure of to-day is the laughing-stock of to-morrow. A hundred years ago you physicians bled the poor body; to-day you vaccinate it, serumize it, and mutilate it with operations; to-morrow it will be something different. 'The art of medicine,' Voltaire said, 'consists in amusing the patient while nature cures the disease.' And yet the poor, ignorant, misguided people have been mesmerized into assisting to legalize these absurdities. . ."

"And make autocrats of us learned medical quacks," the doctor finished with a smile.

"The human mind and body are one. Securing legal control of the people's bodies means likewise controlling their minds, their thinking, their conduct. From this may come religious, political, and medical control of speech, education, expression, and a domination such as may set civilization back beyond the Dark Ages. All evil is possible to the carnal mind. Witness the present war, that was considered an impossibility."

A pause followed, during which the doctor appeared to reflect deeply. At length he looked up. "Is Doctor Roake acquainted with your views?" he asked. "And if so, does he oppose them?"

"His opposition against such views as mine is very active, and is sustained by great numbers and unlimited wealth."

"But of course you will not openly, publicly, oppose him?"

"I shall do what I am guided to do," Alden answered.

The doctor regarded him wonderingly. Then, with a trace of hesitation: "Did Doctor Chaddock return?" he asked.

"No."

He waited expectantly. But Alden vouchsafed no additional

information regarding his personal encounter with Harris. Then: "And do you expect Doctor Roake? He was in communication with me regarding the case. . ."

"I have wired him that his services will not be required," was Alden's reply.

The doctor's eyes widened. "I think," he observed, "that you have already entered the lists with the great doctor. Your courage is inspiring; and yet I tremble for the outcome. I am free to state that I do not favor his plan; but to stand against it may mean ruin. I do not, can not, commercialize healing, Mr. Cragg, nor have I the desire to see it rendered a privileged monopoly. If you command the power to restore your afflicted wife—and I confess that I do not—then gladly do I place her case in your charge, and greatly will I rejoice if you save her." He paused and looked searchingly into Alden's big eyes. Then: "You would not condemn all doctors?"

"By no means," Alden quickly answered. "In its present state of thought, at its present stage of spiritual progress, the world has need of doctors. The honest, sincere doctor—and there are thousands of them—has his place, particularly now. He can do untold good for humanity. It is such doctors that I am seeking. . ."

"I would be honored if you might count me one," said Doctor Rowley earnestly. He hesitated. Then, speaking quickly: "I would be privileged if I might assist you in the work that I now see you have undertaken."

Alden's hand went out and rested on the doctor's. "You are not far from the kingdom," he murmured. "A work has been given me, yet of myself I can do nothing. But I know that the work will be finished, even as I know that my wife will live, for I know the powerlessness of the lying suggestion to which the world and she have appeared so receptive. You can render great service. . ."

"Command me."

"Then release my wife and let her go."

"What? Release . . .!" The doctor sat back in astonishment.

"Release her in your thought. Remove the sentence of death which you have mentally passed upon her. That is why I told you I needed you; that is why I have held you here."

The doctor sat staring at Alden in blank amaze. Then, slowly, comprehension came to him. "I understand," he said as he rose. "I understand, at least in part, what you have been saying to me, and why you have said it. I . . . I am greatly moved. I feel that I want to know you better, Mr. Cragg. I feel that I *shall* know you better, and that I shall

wondrously profit by it. And now let me speak with the nurse before going."

"And go to the patient's parents and reassure them," Alden advised. "Perhaps you can help them."

A few moments afterward the doctor had rejoined Alden. "Our patient still sleeps," he announced, with a grateful sigh. "The father and mother appear more composed—at least, they do not need me. I will come again this evening—unless you should wish to see me earlier." He held out his hand. "I shall study over what you have said to me," he continued earnestly. "And the sentence of death, as far as in me lies, shall be annulled." With which he took his departure.

CHAPTER 18

IN those frivolous, dangerous days before he had crossed the threshold of death, the gross selfishness and ingratitude of Alden Cragg were become bywords even among those who saw only through the thick lens of matter. Now, sitting at Ethel's bedside, her hand clasped tenderly in his, the profound gratitude of the man new-born found voice in the prayer that trembled constantly on his lips: "Father, I thank Thee."

It was a prayer of thankfulness, not for an increase in material store, but rather that he had been stripped of that which he had so erroneously believed he possessed—shorn of his bursting barns, his groaning presses, the hampering material impedimenta of "Craggmont" and all that it had symbolized—and that their removal had revealed a reality behind them unknown, unimagined, and reflecting such radiant harmony as to cast into obscurity all that he had before so mistakenly deemed good.

He was immeasurably grateful that Principle—which he saw now as Love divine, infinite Consideration—had forced him to the sacrifice of material things that must needs precede spiritual understanding, and had compelled him to yield to that which alone could make for his spiritual growth. He could see in his enforced marriage to Ethel more than the effort of personal sense to destroy his mission: he had found in it an opportunity to demonstrate Love. He was, to human sense, cut off quite from his friends of yore, isolated, ostracized; yet the experience had taught him to abandon the personal sense of friendship, and love more deeply the Sons of God. Each step of his progress had been with bleeding feet, each step had been a further surrender of constricting personal sense, based upon the false

evidence of physical sight, hearing, touch, and an acceptance of a more spiritual sense of the all-embracing Father-Motherhood of creative Love. . .

Not that the tempter had not trailed him with seductive offerings: even here it had whispered the noxious suggestion that in the death of Ethel would be found his blessed release. Alden had turned upon it with such excess of moral fervor as to drive it headlong in rout. Ethel's need was indeed an opportunity, not to magnify personal sense, but to prove Life. Then the tempter returned with a burden of evidence of the existence of discord. Alden refused to accommodate himself to it. Despite all that might be *believed* about man, he clung steadfastly to the fact of what Man in reality *is*. This was the buoy that held his head above the waves. By this he denied himself, as the Master gave command. By this he learned the high meaning of gratitude. For gratitude is an understanding of the omnipotence of God.

Through the illumination of spiritual understanding by his experience in Palestine and by these months of intensive training at the hands of Madam Galuth, the fundamental facts of being had come to him, and now he sought to demonstrate, as the Master had demonstrated, that the leprous, the palsied, the dying who crossed his path were, even as he himself had once appeared to be, elements of the "one lie" about Truth. A knowledge of this, he knew, *must* destroy discord and reveal harmony. He had found that God filled heaven and earth. This demonstrated the startling change that had appeared to come over him. From the thrall of erroneous sense, he had become the reflection of the knowledge that Good is forever available, since God, as Principle, is everywhere present. From his first unscientific efforts to avoid evil by ignoring it, he had learned the necessity of facing it boldly in the knowledge that it had neither real presence nor power. Success had come accordingly. The desert of mortal sense could not fail under this transforming knowledge to blossom as the rose.

As he sat engrossed in this thought, the rector appeared at the door. Alden rose at once and softly bade him return to the living-room, whither he followed.

"Harris. . .?" The rector's voice quavered away in a whisper.

Alden bade him be assured that Harris would not return. Of this, his knowledge of human thought-processes convinced him.

The rector sank heavily into a chair and rested his head upon a hand. "God forgive him!" he murmured.

"Is it not rather for us to forgive them both by knowing

the powerlessness of that which seemed to use them?" said Alden gently.

The rector raised his bloodshot eyes. "Forgive *him?*" he demanded excitedly. "He has ruined my life! The disgrace will *kill* me!"

"Say, rather," Alden returned, "that it is your own way of thinking that has resulted in your present circumstances."

The rector's haggard face twitched. "You . . . you accuse *me?*" he cried. "But . . . you are right. I was blind to it all."

"No, I accuse only the false thought that has appeared to use you. I would help you destroy it and release you."

For a moment the rector sat regarding Alden. Then his hand fell heavily upon the arm of his chair. "Enough," he said vehemently; "I presume you get that from Madam Galuth. I have heard similar things from . . . from Marian. I have sought you to learn, if I may, what you intend doing now."

Alden looked at him searchingly. "Is it your wish that I should go?" he asked.

"That," the rector returned unsteadily, "is too much for me to expect. We are in your hands. Our abasement is complete."

Alden's brows drew down in perplexity. "I do not understand you," he said.

"Why, you married Ethel with full knowledge of her awful condition and its cause. What motive could you have had but . . . but to acquire the power over us which that has given you? . . ." He stopped short and uttered a gasp, for Alden had risen suddenly to his full, towering height.

"Power over you? Thank God it has given me the power that can save you from yourself! Yes, I am in charge here now! And the power which I have over you I shall use to the full!"

"Pray God then that my daughter may die!"

"She shall live, despite the evil that voices itself through you!"

The rector got to his feet. "Why does Doctor Roake not come?" he cried, looking about helplessly. "I shall telephone him. . ."

Alden stepped quickly forward and seized his shoulders. Squaring him sharply around, he looked down piercingly into the bulging eyes of the trembling man. "I forbid you to touch the telephone, or to give orders for its use. Otherwise, I shall cut its wires."

"God help us!" gasped the quivering rector. "You are *insane!*"

Alden smiled and reached down and took the rector's hand. "The insanity of Nebuchadnezzar is not upon me," he said more gently, "but upon those who have brought about the circumstances with which we are coping. This is a place that God possesses. Put off the shoes of material belief from your understanding, for you are in the presence of Spirit."

He loosed his grasp, and the rector fell back gaping. Alden stood, still smiling. "You may summon Doctor Rowley," he said, "if it will quiet your fear."

"Doctor Rowley!" exclaimed the rector, stimulated afresh. "No! He is under your influence! I do not wish him on the case! God above! may the child die quickly, if death is her only escape from your mad conduct! . . ."

It was as if the rector's thought had been externalized, for at that moment the nurse came hastily from the sickroom. "Mrs. Cragg is sinking!" she announced. "Come quickly! Shall I call Doctor Rowley?"

"Yes, call him," said Alden, with a glance at the rector. Then he hurried to Ethel's bedside. . .

Alden knew as he sat again by the wan, emaciated girl that the world must at last face the climacteric dream of death and overcome it—He had known it even before Madam Galuth had so forcibly impressed it upon his thought. And he knew that it could be met and mastered only through awaking to a recognition of Life. Such recognition alone could render null the diabolism of mortal mind that had deadened the soul of Ethel Whittier.

"God forgive me for wishing her death!" wailed the fear-torn rector on his knees by the bed. "Oh, God, look down in mercy upon us! Spare her! Remove the afflictions which have fallen so heavily upon us! For Jesus' sake! For Jesus' sake! . . ."

"Shall I use the needle?" Alden heard the nurse ask.

He shook his head. Matter could not remove the error which the human mind alone had created. The nurse, obedient to the instructions left by Doctor Rowley, stepped back. The moaning prayer of the rector floated through the darkened room. Alden reached down and touched his shoulder. "Go," he said gently, "and wait outside to meet Doctor Rowley."

A little fluttering gasp stirred the bloodless lips of the patient. The witchcraft of mortal mind gave ground in its grapple with Truth. Alden saw it, and knew why. Re-born, free of the dragging accompaniment of fear of death, he, of all others, was equipped to trace the effect back to its mental cause and face the Goliath of error unshaken. He, by reason of his stupendous experience in Antonia's Tower, could now

accept Truth at once and without argument. Because of this, he knew that the false claim of discord now urging upon his consciousness had naught to sustain it and must fall. . .

Ethel rallied; her eyes opened, and her feeble gaze rested upon Alden. Then her lips moved. He bent to catch the words. "Go away," she whispered. And a slight scowl wrinkled her brow.

He sat back, and a look of sadness came into his eager face. She closed her eyes and dropped into sleep. Silence lay upon the room. It was not broken until Doctor Rowley arrived.

"She is . . .?"

"It is the rector who needs you, Doctor," said Alden softly. And the doctor glanced at Ethel and back to Alden, and bowed his comprehension.

Then days passed. And slowly, yet steadily, Alden Cragg toiled up from the valley of death, bearing Ethel in his arms. Faithfully Doctor Rowley walked at his side, yet not so much to give as to receive from this man of power who had so mightily drawn and held him. "I am beginning to see what you mean when you say that to cling to *materia medica* is to break the First Commandment," he one day said to Alden, after the latter had explained his refusal to permit him to return to the use of the opiate when Ethel manifested a slight reversal. "I agree with you that drugs are effective in the exact ratio of the power attributed to them by the human mind. This mind endows tobacco, for example, with certain soothing, although ultimately destructive, effects. It is plain mesmerism. Upon opium it confers the power to reduce the user to insensibility. The real narcotic in either case is neither the tobacco nor the drug, but certain beliefs in the human mind. And the mind ignorantly attributes these mesmeric effects to powers supposed to be inherent in the drug. The inebriate drugs himself, not with the alcohol, but with mental pictures, the beliefs, the mesmeric effects, conjured up in his own consciousness. It is mental morphia that we have to deal with."

"It is the human mind's narcotic beliefs that numb man's spiritual perception and drug his consciousness into sleep and death," Alden returned. "The man governed by lust of revenge, for example, is as completely in a state of coma as the one put to sleep by laudanum."

"And the narcotics of the pharmacopœia are really the externalizations of the human mind's beliefs in mental morphia."

"Yes. Lust, selfishness, idleness, are mental drugs with which the human mind narcotizes itself. As you say, certain well-defined instances of the effects of this mental narcotizing

on the human mind are externalized in the narcotics of the pharmacopœia. Upon these distinctive types the world has placed moral and legal bans, yet it neglects utterly the *real* narcotics, the mental narcotics enumerated by Paul as the works of the flesh, such as adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, hatred, wrath, murders, drunkenness, witchcraft, which in their physical manifestations drug men's minds unto death."

The doctor nodded. "I have never been a religious person," he said. "But I might have been one, had the preachers explained these things as you have. But I couldn't accept the preachers' views; their traditional theology held no meaning for me; it did not meet my needs; so I fell away from the Church. But I think I understand how what you call 'animal magnetism' has deadened the human mind and secured control of it through mental narcotizing and carried it straight to hell. And I know you will not consider it unprofessional of me to say that I consider Doctor Roake's plan of medical control a gigantic narcotic to put the world to sleep and accomplish this same thing wholesale."

During these days of Ethel's return to health Alden had often sat at her bedside and striven to gain her confidence, had labored to convince her that he did not condemn, that he would forget the error, that he would take her to his heart and make a home for her, and shield her, protect her, help her upward. But always she repelled him, always she turned a deaf ear to his loving advances. "Go away," she continually repeated. "I don't want you here." And at last he turned from her, but with his thought on the nine lepers who took the divine gift and spurned the giver.

Throughout these anxious days the rector and his wife studiously avoided Alden. Like Ethel, smothered in suffering and disgrace, they waited uneasily for the hour of his departure, yet dreaded his return to Crestelridge. For there was that about him now that they had never observed before, a something that immeasurably disturbed them, that unendurably irritated by the very fact of its reality, that fearfully menaced them by its demonstrated power. He had not told them that they were the children of evil—quite the contrary, he had sought to reveal to them the true Man. Yet in their self-accusation did they attribute the condemnation to him. And thus doing, they continued to make real to themselves those frailties which hung from their garments and hampered their progress upward.

Then, after Ethel had left her bed and taken her first steps, Alden announced to Doctor Rowley his intention of departing.

The doctor's face grew serious. "I presume you are acting wisely," he said, with a touch of sadness. "Your patient—I do not say 'mine'—will soon be normal. And I can see that your situation here is, for some reason, not wholly pleasant. But . . . I would like to keep you with me . . . I should have fewer failures then, and would not be so desirous of quitting the practice of medicine."

Alden put an arm about the doctor's shoulders. "A good doctor is a good man," he said gently. "The world has great need of them now. I may send for you. Will you come?"

The doctor seized his hand. "Yes," he answered in a thickening voice.

"For I think," Alden finished, "that you too have been called."

When the rector learned that Alden was departing, fear returned and smote him sore. "We are in your hands," he repeated with trembling lips. "Yours and Doctor Roake's, for he too knows our awful secret. Thank God that Doctor Rowley's skill availed to save Ethel; and yet it will have been expended in vain if . . . if you . . ."

"I am Ethel's husband," said Alden quietly. "I shall protect her, as in the past. Harris Chaddock will not dare betray himself. Doctor Roake will use you—but he has long done that. Doubtless if you continue to serve him he will divulge nothing."

The rector's face flushed red. "Oh," he groaned, "you mock me! The world mocks me! I cannot return to Crestelridge! I cannot! The disgrace is killing me!"

"You can return," said Alden. "Nay, it is your duty, for you have a work to do there. To postpone it means added suffering. I do not mock you. I would help you out of your terrible situation. Will you return with me, to work with me, with Marian, and with your God?"

The rector lifted his wide eyes. Again he seemed to hear Alden's voice as it rang out to the congregation of St. Jude's: *"Choose ye!"* Again Doctor Roake's powerful personality rose up before him. He knew why Doctor Roake had not come to attend upon Ethel; and he could imagine what payment Alden must make for the affront. He could have admired the courage requisite for such a stand, had he not doubted Alden's judgment, even his sanity. No, he dared not trust himself with such a co-laborer. Besides . . . "Will you abandon Madam Galuth and return to St. Jude's?" he asked.

"No."

"Alden, will you make me lose my church? Will you deliberately bring further affliction upon us?"

"I have brought you the Christ."

The rector fell back. "You have brought a sword!" he cried sharply. Then he turned away with heavy forebodings.

Mrs. Whittier, from the couch on which she lay nursing her remnant of strength, summoned Alden. "You will not make us suffer any more, will you, Alden?" she pleaded, looking up at him through her tears. "We can go back to Crestelridge if we can trust you. But if they learn about . . . *this* . . . it will kill me! It wasn't Ethel's fault . . . you know that, don't you? But we can't refuse to have anything to do with Harris Chaddock, for he . . . he could just ruin us with the terrible scandal! Oh, we are in an awful plight! But, Alden, you will stand by us? You know, Ethel will have money some day, Penberry's. If you help us to hush this thing up, everything will be all right, and you will be rich."

Not a word of gratitude for sacrifices made; only the age-old plea of Self. . .

"Alden, you didn't marry her for revenge, did you?" she whimpered. "Oh, tell me that you didn't! For we didn't do anything to you. And you will do nothing now? Promise! Promise! It is so terribly suspicious, your marrying her when you knew . . .!"

"She is my wife. I will protect her," Alden repeated.

"You don't want your own name up, do you?" the distracted woman went on. "It *was* up, you know, for your mother . . ."

"Stop! I have told you that I will protect Ethel. I would do more, if you would let me."

"Oh, that is all we ask! Nothing but that! Nothing! And it is *so* little!"

Little enough, indeed! It was the least that he longed to do for them. But in their great mesmerism it was all that they would permit.

And after he had gone north Mrs. Whittier voiced her revived hopes to the rector. "We will see what he does. I will keep corresponding with Mrs. Tellus, Mrs. Black, and Mrs. Kerl. If nothing develops within a month, we can begin to think of going back. Doctor Roake will stand by us, I know, for he needs you. Oh, if we were only sure about Alden!"

"What do you mean?"

"Whether he will ever get the Cragg estate back again. For if we were sure that he wouldn't, then the thing to do would be to get Ethel separated from him and married to Harris. . ."

"No, no! The Church forbids divorce!"

"Nonsense! Our needs take precedence over the Church! If we were sure about Alden. . . And if Ethel only had the grounds. . ."

"God forbid!" cried the miserable rector. Then he buried

his head in his hands and burst into tears. "Oh, the disgrace, the disgrace! It is killing me! I shall lose my church! I shall die! Oh, let death come quickly, for I no longer care to live!"

CHAPTER 19

THE train that brought Alden back to New York had been long delayed by the derailing of a heavy freight preceding it, and the afternoon was well advanced when at length he arrived in Crestelridge. Yet he had been scarce aware of the delay. For him the mortal concept of time was fast dissolving before the transmuting fact of the eternal Now. The human mind's self-limitation by the material measurements of clocks and calendars had been broken by his re-birth. The human measurements of mortality no longer frightened him with their cruel suggestions of approaching senility and death; his employment of the calendar, as of other material modes, was but the choosing among human concepts of those which stood nearest Principle, knowing that release from their domination would come as he advanced out of the mortal concept of finite existence.

As he journeyed he had rejoiced—not that the "spirits" had been shown subject to him, but because his name was "written in heaven": his character was an increasing reflection of the Christ. His glorying was not in any sense in human power of his own, but in the demonstrated knowledge of divine power resulting from a purer consciousness of the allness of Mind, God. Such consciousness is itself heaven. In it alone is liberty.

By the human calendar it was July the fourth. Yet the festive appearance of the towns through which he passed would have unmistakenly betokened the day. On every hand was lively celebration—the more noisy because ignorant—of America's emancipation from British tyranny. And ever and anon, as Alden studied the manifestations of delight, his thought grew big with question. Why, in view of the marvelous experiences to be won in throwing off the yoke of materialism and the gaining of *spiritual* liberty, should mankind continue to hold so doggedly to that which is demonstrably false? Why should Wilson Whittier, facing certain destruction, cling so tenaciously to the hand that he must know was leading him into the pit? Why, but that the world has been educated for centuries in the destructive tenet that the so-called testimony of the physical senses constitutes man's very existence? It

was the firm belief in matter as substance; it was the pernicious belief that the human body—demonstrably a fluid, passing, inconstant thing of mortal thought—is the very man created by an omniscient God; it was the mesmeric acceptance in the twentieth century of Dante's and Milton's densely materialistic theological concepts—concepts utterly rotten and foully poisonous, but clothed in angelic vestments—that had deluded the rector and darkened his thought, as they have the world's, and were hounding him through increasing sorrow and pain into oblivion. For between the rector and his God stood *matter*.

As Alden passed through the depot in Crestelridge his attention was arrested by a poster announcing the program of the day. Uncle Sam was shrewdly availing himself of the patriotic fervor stimulated by the nation's anniversary to press home his own needs, and a mass meeting was at that moment in progress in an up-town theater for the purpose of stimulating the inert and reluctant to larger sacrifices in the stupendous task of crushing the false ideal of Prussian autocracy with material weapons. Among the speakers the name of Dr. Jeremiah Roake caught his eye, and he halted. "Even Judas sat with the Twelve," he murmured, staring at it. "And material Eden was not proof against the lying serpent." Then he boarded a street car that would convey him to the Glass theater.

He entered unobtrusively and slipped behind some men standing in the rear of the crowded auditorium. Doctor Roake, the last speaker on the program, was just concluding his address. The eyes of the audience were riveted upon him, and he seemed to hold them spellbound. Again and again, after a sweeping flight of oratory in which he startlingly voiced innuendoes regarding the grievous iniquities practised by the Mother country upon the American Colonies, he would abruptly pause and appear to loosen his hold on their mentalities. Then, as he stood back, with a smile hovering about his mouth and his black eyes glittering, a burst of applause would shake the building and the roars of the people would fill the place with deafening din.

Alden listened attentively. But soon his eyes began to rove over the audience in amazement. How little these people understood what was using them! How easily they were being swayed by falsehoods maliciously destructive! And none moved to check the scattering of the pernicious seeds that were dropping so fast upon the fallow mentalities of these unthinking clods! . . .

His eyes began to glow, and he moved forward. Clinging to the wall, he squeezed slowly along the length of the room and gained the door that led to the stage. Through this he

passed quietly, almost unnoticed, mounted the steps, and stood, among scores of others, in the wings, which, as well as the back of the stage, were filled with the doctor's interested auditors.

Then, followed by round after round of applause, the doctor concluded his address and returned to his seat. The chairman of the afternoon, nodding, smiling, and clapping vigorously, stepped forward to conclude the program. And Alden emerged swiftly from the wings, passed ahead of him, and strode to the edge of the stage and faced the people.

The swiftness of his action, and his startling appearance, like a gray apparition that had risen through the floor or dropped from above, caused the audience first to gasp, then to settle back with mouths agape. Doctor Roake half rose. The chairman fell back and stood rigid with astonishment.

A moment of strained silence, and Alden raised his hand. "A hundred and forty-three years ago your forefathers acquired national independence," he began in a voice that, though low, reached the farthest limits of the auditorium. "In that same year a German doctor, Franz Mesmer, brought mesmerism to the notice of the world. Can you see the significance of these two events?"

He paused. The audience sat tense. "That which your forefathers fought against was just what this German doctor had brought into prominence," he went on. "A mental influence which had become incarnate in the conduct of England's king, himself a Prussian. Your Revolutionary War was fought against a condition of thought which threatened then to make of Britain an autocracy governed by mesmerism. That war, which your forefathers waged against a king imported from Germany, saved, not only America, but Britain herself.

"Manasseh and Ephraim fought then against each other, under the spell of this Prussian mesmerism. To-day they are fighting side by side to break this same spell and save the world from consuming in hatred bred of ignorance."

He stopped and stood for a moment in thought. Did not Marian, typifying Manasseh, revolt against the mesmerism that had been using him, as Ephraim, and by that revolt, and the trial which it brought, save both herself and him from its deadly influence? He and Marian, once opponents, were leagued now against the common enemy of mankind. The parallel struck him forcibly.

And the parallel went further. He raised his head and looked out over the waiting people. "The mental assassin has appeared in your midst," he cried, "striving to drive a wedge between Britain and America. He knows that tottering civ-

ilization cannot survive a rift between these two great English-speaking peoples; he knows that the future of the world depends upon unity between them."

He paused again. Doctor Roake left his seat and went swiftly to the still dazed chairman. "Who is this mental assassin?" Alden resumed. "It is Dan, the renegade of Israel; it is Dan, the serpent of old; it is the mesmerism typified by this false Israelite that seeks to split Anglo-Israel to-day in hatred as it did of yore. For Britain is Ephraim and America is Manasseh, as of old. Your George Washington was a valiant knight of Anglo-Israel. In checking the mesmerism of the Prussian king of England of that day he opened the way for the British settlements to become independent commonwealths of the British Empire, bound to the Mother country only by bonds of love. Were he here to-day he would denounce, in terms that I cannot command, the hellish propaganda that seeks now to break those bonds, to dismember Britain, to separate her from America, overthrow civilization, and loose the forces of chaos and night that will blot out the Word.

"Oh, hear me, my brothers! It is England that is to-day your ally; it is mesmerism that is still your deadly enemy. England and America are brothers—did you not know it? They are sons of Jacob, who, overcoming the mesmerism of error, became Israel. Oh, listen not to the lying, poisonous propaganda that would set these brothers of old against each other in order that the Word may be destroyed in the Armageddon which is yet to come! For your *real* emancipation has not been won. It will not come with the overthrow of the Prussian. It is spiritual freedom only that will end war and establish peace —spiritual freedom from the autocracies of religion, medicine, commercialism, and material man-made beliefs of every sort. The greatest struggle which you must face is the struggle to throw off the yoke of political religion and medicine and win wholeness, which is the real health. In winning it, you win heaven. But you cannot win it with hatred; you cannot win it by hurling material force against the false ideals of the mental manipulator, for only a right ideal will overcome a wrong one; you cannot win with material weapons, but only with the spiritual weapon of the knowledge of God!" . . .

He had spoken rapidly, but by now the chairman, with whom Doctor Roake had been whispering, had recovered from his astonishment and was at his side. Voices began to rise from various parts of the auditorium and stage.

"Who is he?" and "What's he driving at?" some cried. And many of the auditors got to their feet.

"He's Alden Cragg," came the answer from one who recog-

nized the white-haired man. "He's a Britisher, back from the war. . ."

"Trying to break up the meeting!"

"He has nerve to come here to recruit for England!"

"Listen, gentlemen!" It was Doctor Roake. He had stepped forward and was holding up a hand. "I know him well. He did gallant work in Palestine. But he is suffering from shell-shock and his mind is affected. . ."

"Put him in an asylum!" someone yelled.

"We licked England once and we can do it again!"

"I will take him with me in my car," said Doctor Roake, addressing the chairman and at the same time linking his arm through Alden's. "Let us pass, gentlemen, if you please."

"Hold on!" It was Doctor Benson who called. He clambered, panting, upon the stage and came to Alden. "This fellow isn't as crazy as you think!"

Doctor Roake pushed himself forward aggressively. "I have been his physician, I know the case. . ."

"Look here," the chairman put in nervously, "we don't want to start anything here!"

Doctor Benson ignored them both and addressed Alden. "I'm mighty interested in what you said. Every true American citizen ought to be. Tell us what you think would be the result of a split between the United States and England."

Alden released his arm from Doctor Roake's and looked out over the people. A dense mass thronged him, eager, expectant. "Go ahead!" they urged. "Speak up!" He turned and looked steadily into Doctor Benson's face. Then, apparently satisfied as to the latter's sincerity, he replied clearly: "The result would be the dismemberment of the British Empire."

"That's got to come," someone loudly asserted, "if we are ever to have peace."

"It will not bring peace, but chaos," Alden answered.

"England is in league with Japan now!" shouted another.

Alden turned in his direction. "Those who hope to set England and America against each other through mutual hatred," he said, "do so in the belief that then Japan will dominate the Pacific ocean and be able to seize Australia. Ireland, they hope, will so exhaust England that India will find it easy to secede. Canada, they believe, will follow. The British Empire will then break up. The people's thought of war between America and Japan will be externalized; and, though America will win, it will be a Phyrric victory, leaving Japan really the victor and such a power that the Mohammedan world will feel safe in rising to aid her in stamping out Christianity, for Japan has investigated our interpretation of Christianity and found

it wanting. Revolutions will then take place in many countries. The American government will be subverted by the forces now working to that end. And the whole world will eventually sink into chaos and night."

He had spoken calmly, in a voice of deep solemnity and with scarcely a rising inflection. When he concluded, his auditors stood staring at him dumfounded.

"But—good heavens!" cried Doctor Benson, "you don't believe there are any insane enough to imagine that they could possibly benefit from such a catastrophe, do you?"

"There are those who are mesmerized into believing that they would," Alden replied. "And, because of their assumed authority, they are mesmerizing others into the same suicidal belief."

"Who would benefit?" called a voice.

Alden turned toward the speaker. "Possibly organized religion would materially benefit, if it could restore the ignorance of the Middle Ages; certainly organized medicine, playing upon the people's fear of pain and death."

"He's an atheist!" somebody whispered.

"He's a British subject, and he's prejudiced," declared another.

"I am a British subject," Alden answered, "but I do not apologize for Britain's conduct during Revolutionary days, nor for her conduct since then, for none has wholly emerged from the mesmeric spell. But I do know that the influences now loosed to stir up hatred between her and the American people are satanic, and that unless the English-speaking people dwell together in harmony civilization is doomed and Christianity will disappear from off the face of the earth."

Doctor Roake had seized the chairman by the arm. "Get him out of here!" he demanded in an undertone. "He's insane!"

Alden heard the doctor's remark and wheeled upon him. "That," he said calmly, "is a lie."

"Enough of this!" cried the frightened chairman. "Hear! Hear!" rose from others. A tremor swept over the crowd. Doctor Roake fell back; his lips parted; his eyes stuck out; his color went from black to angry red, then slowly settled into an ashen hue. A forced smile at length wreathed his mouth. "You . . . you are not yourself!" he exclaimed.

"You are quite mistaken," Alden returned. "I *am* myself. But I am not the man you suppose me to be. . ."

A cry escaped the doctor. "You are an impostor! I said so from the first!"

"Gentlemen!" put in the perturbed chairman. "The program is finished! Let us disperse!"

"I am not an impostor, nor am I insane," Alden continued, looking steadily at Doctor Roake. "It is you, rather, who are mesmerized into madness."

"Send for the police!" cried a voice in the rear.

"You are making grave accusations," Doctor Roake gave back in a shaking voice. "You shall answer for them. Why, gentlemen," turning to the people, "what possible motive could *I* have for . . ."

"The motive of domination of your fellow men," Alden interrupted him. "The world may crash in ruin, but *you* know that men's fears will remain. With civilization in ashes, black ignorance will again hide Truth. Then the mesmerizer will play upon human fears with medical superstition, with religious falsehoods, and will bind mankind with mental chains, enslave them with such legislation as the political doctors are now securing—it will be very easy with America prostrate and the British Empire dismembered. . ."

"The fellow is crazy!" cried Doctor Roake, purple and perspiring. "Get him away! He is dangerous! . . ."

The crowd pressed forward. Alden turned and faced them, faced them calmly, with his tall form towering erect, challenging, menacing in its manifestation of the power of righteousness. The people halted and stood hesitant. The stern look in his eyes softened, a smile came into his face. It seemed to dawn upon the people that he loved them. Then he turned. They gave way before him. And, unmolested, he descended from the stage, passed down through the auditorium, and left the theater.

CHAPTER 20

THERE were many elements in Madam Galuth's conviction that Alden Cragg would now have to meet Doctor Roake, that he was the only one who could meet him, and that he would have to meet him humanly alone. And yet she was certain that Alden had so succeeded in impersonalizing the issue that in his thought of the doctor he had clearly separated the man from that which he reflected and which appeared to use him. Alden's contest was not with Doctor Roake, but with the age-old opponent of life and liberty, animal magnetism.

Alden had himself voiced this to her after his return from Florida and in connection with his simple recital of his work for Ethel and his refutation of the evil which had been voiced through Doctor Roake in the Glass theater. And Madam Galuth had reflected gravely upon it, but would not rebuke him for his

zeal, for well she knew that the hour had sounded that called the contestants to the arena. "The poet Keats," she reminded herself, "never beheld a forest tree without beholding the dryad. So Alden now does not behold human beings without discerning that which appears to animate them. And back of all the falsity he sees the perfect Man through the material veil." She knew that mental manipulation had driven Ethel into the dark valley, and that none but Alden had detected it. He had been the "remnant" that had not bowed the knee to Baal; and thereby was Ethel saved. He had again been the "remnant" in the theater. What he had accomplished there she might not say, but she could know that because of him error had been stirred to the depth of its false foundations. "They are afraid of you now," she told him. "They will crush you if they can. But your eyes are open to behold the chariots of fire on the mountain-side. You know that the Syrian hosts are deprived of wisdom by their own conduct and are without the guidance of Principle. Go, therefore, Israel, for, as of old, thou art the battle-axe of the Lord!"

The press had made no mention of the incident in the theater. But the press had been visited by agents of the Roake religio-medical organization and by them convinced of the insignificance of the affair and the impropriety of reference to it.

Likewise had Doctor Benson been visited. And the doctor had been moved by the carefully worded suggestion that ruin stared him in the face. He had not yet become affiliated with the Roake plan. It was urged upon him that his support was needed—although he smiled at the thought—and an application blank was laid before him with a finger on the instruction: "Sign here". He did not sign. He asked time for further consideration. And it was granted.

While still groping through the valley of indecision he called on Doctors Sale and Lann. But he learned that they had already entered the organization. "I stood out as long as I could," Doctor Sale explained. "But I happened to lose a case, a little girl . . ."

"Well," Benson interrupted with a smile, "doctors are never blamed for losing patients. That's where they have the advantage over other healers."

"Very true," Sale continued. "And I don't think anybody could have saved this child. But for some reason the newspapers printed the whole thing, gave my name as the *unsuccessful* physician—good Lord! it must have lost me thousands of dollars' worth of business. And all the time I was running advertisements in those same papers, and paying for them, mind you! Well, then Roake's agents called on me and said

that my advertising would get me nowhere, but that in their closed-shop organization my name would be sent with commendatory references to newspapers and periodicals all over the country gratis, and I would not be subjected to any more such harmful write-ups. You see, they send bulletins to the papers with references to the patronage the various doctors in the organization are receiving from wealthy and influential people, and all that. If I lance a boil for the rich Mrs. Dodd my name will go everywhere, with the statement that I performed a skillful operation—it costs me nothing and brings me business. Moreover, I'm protected, for if the scalpel slips and Mrs. Dodd bleeds to death the legal department of the organization takes my case, free of charge, and gets me out of the scrape, and all publicity is suppressed. I get all this for annual dues of only fifty dollars. Besides, I can get myself called out of churches or theaters any time I wish, and that makes the people sit up and exclaim: 'My, what a practice Doctor Sale has! He must be very successful!' And I can have myself interviewed, and my learned pronouncements on serums and health hints and dietetics will be published free in the newspapers, and my business booms accordingly."

"Wonderful!" exclaimed Doctor Benson with a sardonic smile. "German propaganda is piffle compared to this! And—may I ask?—you believe this is contributing to the improvement of public morals and health?"

"No. It is contributing only to our bank accounts."

"And you are not ashamed to say so?"

"Don't say that, Benson! I *am* ashamed of it, God knows! All this medical propaganda, this poisonous drugging and mad carving, this criminal scaring of people into the clutches of the leech! . . . But what can I do? What are *you* going to do?"

"God knows! I am asking myself that same question. The honest doctor is having a hard time of it in these days of rampant commercialism."

"Honesty is an obsolete virtue, Benson. Deceit, hypocrisy, lying—they're in the air, they're characteristic of the age, they've plunged the world into war, they're destroying civilization!"

"That reminds me: were you in the Glass theater on the Fourth? No? Didn't hear the speech-making there? Oh, no; guess it didn't amount to much—although Roake spoke."

"So? Any reference to England?"

Doctor Benson started. "A little, but quite veiled. Why?"

"Well, in the literature that he's sending broadcast I have been surprised to read about the menace of the British Empire. I really didn't know much about it before, how England has

destroyed every nation that's stood in her way. I've got some of the dope somewhere. Here," taking some circulars from a drawer, "take 'em along with you. I really am surprised at Roake's daring, for England is our ally now. But he evidently has the courage of his convictions. Besides, he's a world power himself. And . . . But, I say, Benson, you'd better join his organization—though it grinds me to give you the advice."

Doctor Lann was but slightly communicative. "Yes," he admitted, "I am aware of the dangers of centralized power. But we are all in it now. Look at our Government, conducting the war like an absolute dictator, running railroads, controlling food! It's in the air, I guess."

"But," Doctor Benson persisted, "Roake is a skilled surgeon. Why isn't he contented with his ability to serve the public? Why must he prostitute his profession to politics?"

"He is striking for power, as everybody is, from the Kaiser up. He is no longer a physician, he is . . . I don't know what. I don't know what I am, either. But I'm making money—By the way, did you see my little essay on *'The Normal Life-Cycle'* that was published in Roake's magazine? Here," handing him a pamphlet from a considerable pile on the desk, "take one along. It goes all over the world. Wonderful advertising, and doesn't cost me a cent."

Doctor Benson went back to his office and threw himself into his chair in despair. "No wonder the world is at war!" he groaned. "God help us!"

Then he drew out the application for membership in the Roake organization and fell to studying it. At length his hand reached for a pen. "I'm a coward," he muttered. He took up the pen and dipped it, but hesitated, and slowly laid it down again. "I won't do it!" he said sharply. "I won't!" He tossed the application upon the table and started to rise. But he halted, with his eyes fixed upon the paper. Again he settled down in his chair and took it up. Again his hand went out and seized the pen. Then, as if shaking off some invisible influence, he threw both paper and pen upon the table, sprang from his chair, and began to pace the room. "I won't be coerced! I won't! I won't! He can't make me!" he uttered repeatedly, striding back and forth in great agitation, and clasping and unclasping his hands behind his back. But again he returned to his chair and dropped into it with a groan. "But what can I do? I can't fight him alone!"

His head dropped upon his arms, and he remained thus for some time. At length he roused up and drew the application savagely to him. "I'm a coward, a damned coward!" he muttered between his teeth. And he seized the pen and hurriedly affixed his signature to the paper.

The door opened and he looked up. Ted Sayor was entering. He rose quickly and advanced, scrutinizing the young man to make certain that it really was Ted. The latter came stealthily into the room, glancing carefully back, and closed the door noiselessly behind him. Doctor Benson held out a hand. "It's an age since I've laid eyes on you," he said. "What brings you here?"

Ted grasped the doctor's hand and sank into a chair, where he sat breathing hard. His cheeks were ashen, but for a spot that glowed like a live coal in each. His shoulders drooped, and his clothes hung loosely on his frame. But the old smile of insouciance still fluttered about his mouth, and his attire was as meticulously perfect as ever. "Organ recital," he replied huskily. "And I don't like the program. Thought you might suggest some changes."

"You haven't come to consult me professionally?" the doctor queried in amazement. "Why, I thought you found us medics useful only as butts for your jokes."

"I've had my inning," Ted answered, smiling wanly. "It's yours now. My own fault entirely: I caressed sin; now I'm embracing . . . death."

"Not so bad as that, I hope!"

"I've said it, Doc. But I thought I'd like to have you look me over to see if there's any hope—although I know there isn't. But I want to hear somebody say so. I'm tired of being strung along. I want to hear the verdict from somebody who's sincere. And you'll have to hurry, Doc. And, remember, it's all between you and me: nobody else is to know that I've been to see you. And I don't know as I can screw up courage to come again. . . Takes strength to climb your stairs, you know. . ." A fit of coughing seized him, and he bent forward, wracked with the paroxysm.

The doctor stood studying him, his head nodding slowly. Then, as Ted recovered: "I don't believe I am the one. You'd better consult a specialist."

Ted sat back with a tired sigh. "I don't want a specialist," he said, smiling feebly. "I want an old-time family physician; I want an old grandmother sort of doctor, one of the hand-holding, back-patting, comfort-giving, loving kind, that don't sit with five fingers on the cash-register and two on your pulse."

A lump came into the doctor's throat, but he forced a laugh as he sat down. "There are no more good old family doctors," he said gently. "They have been swallowed up in the specialist mania. Oh, I know the kind you mean, like my dear old præceptor. Best and kindest-hearted man in the world. He knew everything there was to know about anatomy, physiology, path-

ology, and nothing whatever about curing his patients. His hobby was what he called the 'shotgun remedy', a mixture of some fifty different ingredients which he gave to his patients in the hope that at least one of them would prove efficacious. He literally filled our town cemetery with his drugging and slashing. Everybody knew it, and they made all manner of fun of him; but just the moment anybody got sick the old sawbones was sent for posthaste, and was as credulously believed and obeyed as a South Sea idol."

Ted seemed to revive as he listened. "You've got the dope, Doc," he returned, with something of his old spirit of banter. "And people in those days were just as healthy as we are now with our enormous crop of specialists, who are mostly experts in price and name only. Besides, a fellow could afford to be sick then and still have enough money left after paying the family doctor to go to an occasional circus. For the doctor wasn't living in the biggest house on the main street then. But it's only the rich who can afford to be ailing in these days of intensive specializing, 'cause first comes the diagnostician, then mama's nerves must be treated by a neurologist, papa's throat by a laryngologist, sister's appendix by an abdominal surgeon, auntie's lungs by a pulmonary expert, the kiddo must have a pediatrist, half the family need an oculist, the old folks require an orthopedist, and everybody must have a dentist—then there's the army of expert assistants to operate the X-ray apparatus, the microscopes, the sterilizers, to take cultures, grow the bacteria, and to handle the instruments and mechanical devices and clear the way for the hygienic specialist, the chemist to analyze the water and scrub the air, and the bacteriologist to scout for any threatened invasion of naughty germs—and meantime someone will need an obstetrician, and a trained nurse or two, and several practical nurses, and bandage winders, and—well, then we'll probably be gathered in by the undertaker who is waiting just outside the door. The rest will be left to God Almighty." He stopped to take breath, for the effort had been exhausting.

The doctor laughed. "There isn't much left to God Almighty these days," he said. "They were toting a bone of St. Anne in a procession over here at St. Michael's Roman Church last Sunday. A gorgeously robed priest carried a hungry-looking bit of bone—Lord knows whose it was originally!—he was toting it on a dish of gold, while hundreds of fanatics swarmed around him, singing and calling upon St. Anne to solve their problems for them. It's difficult to see just where God Almighty comes in these days." Then, after a pause, in which he sat looking closely at Ted, his face became grave. "Have you been receiving special treatment?" he abruptly asked.

Ted hesitated. "Roake has been tinkering about me a bit," he reluctantly admitted.

The doctor's eyes grew large. "Then I must not interfere," he returned quickly. "Unless you have dismissed him, I could not . . ."

"Nobody ever dismisses Roake," Ted put in huskily. "When he is called he brings his trunk and comes to stay. When he leaves he takes a deed to the house. I can't find out anything from him about myself. . . But I know I'm in a bad way. . . I know what I've got. . . I know what I need: it's help of the right sort, the honest sort. That's why I'm here. But I don't want it known. Yes, I've been receiving treatment, very *special* treatment; and since you are not a member of the great Roake organization . . ."

"How did you learn that?" the doctor interrupted.

"I've heard them talking about you. They don't understand why you are not in, but they're expecting you. But you're not going to join, eh? Oh, it's a great scheme, this thing that Roake and Whittier worked up and the Craggs financed! It's a bottomless grab-bag, and those doctors and preachers are in to their waist-lines. But I knew you wouldn't join. . . And that's why I came to see you. . . That's why I don't mind saying that Roake is shooting serums into my arms, and swabbing my throat with funny stuff, and . . . So I want you to give me the sentence: it'll come better from you than from him."

"But," said the doctor, "why don't you go to Arizona? Get away from this abominable climate."

Ted laughed hollowly. "Didn't I tell you that I caressed sin and am embracing death? I *can't* break away—at least, until the war ends and my financial . . . I say, you're not going to join the Roake organization, are you?"

The doctor's reply was irrelevant. "You say Roake uses serums in your case? But medicine will not reach it; there is no serum known that will. . . You say he . . ." He paused and sat back, looking at Ted questioningly.

Then, after long reflection, the doctor put another query. "Has nothing been said with regard to isolating you? Harris Chaddock, the Health Executive . . ."

"Oh, Roake turned me over to him at first," Ted replied. "And Harris sent me right to a young dentist who had just opened up here. Infection of the gums, he said. I'd never had any trouble with my teeth. But the dentist tinkered away, treating my gums, until one day, in Roake's office, I was sitting at Chaddock's desk and happened to see a note from this dentist in which he refunded to Harris half the fees he had charged

me to date. I knew then that I was the goat, and I quit the dentist *pronto!* It had cost me then something over three thousand dollars, of which Harris got half. But I couldn't squeal . . . I . . . I say, why am I telling you this? To get it off my weak chest, I suppose. Part of your treatment, eh?"

The doctor leaned closer to Ted. "Do you think that Harris makes a practice of sending patients to such dentists?"

Ted smiled. "He's sent many a patient with perfectly healthy teeth to unethical dentists who have charged thousands of dollars for treatment that wasn't required and for extracting absolutely sound teeth, and have split the fees with Harris. It's an old game, Doc. I knew you were innocent; that's why I came to you. I knew you didn't conduct clinics where patients were given preliminary treatment free and then steered to other doctors in the clique who would bleed them and split the fees with you."

"And you know that this is done?"

"Don't ask me. Ask some of the members of the Roake organization. Ask some of the general practitioners in that wonderful organization how many times they have sent patients to surgeons for useless and needless operations, for which they got half the fees. Harris Chaddock insisted that I should submit to an operation, and tried to send me to . . . Oh, well, it doesn't matter."

"Is Harris exercising his privilege under the Wess law of visiting homes in search of contagion?"

"With Fay Meuse as his chauffeur, yes. It's an edifying spectacle."

"But the Wess law is really unconstitutional. No less an authority than Senator Chaddock once said so."

"Senator Chaddock!" A tremor seemed to pass through Ted's body. "The senator . . . Yes, and there's something strange there. . . But I can't say anything. . . He's handling my affairs. . . But I never see him now unless Roake is present. . . He's Roake's lap-dog."

Another violent coughing spell came upon Ted. The doctor rose and hurried to minister to him. At its conclusion Ted lay back in his chair weak and shaking. "I'm talking too much," he whispered hoarsely. "Forget all I've said, Doc. I guess my sickness has turned my head a bit. Don't . . . don't give me . . . away, will you? I was so full of this . . . I simply had to spill it out. . . And I knew of nobody to tell it to but you. And . . . you're not going to join them, are you?"

The doctor's eyes roved to the application which he had just signed. He stared at it for a moment, then he reached out covertly, drew it to him, and crushed it in his fist. "No," he

said grimly, as he tossed the crumpled paper into the waste basket. "Now tell me, how do you happen to know these things?"

"Oh, Roake keeps me in his offices a good deal, and hundreds of doctors and dentists—mostly fledgelings—and others come in every day. The place is crowded. I can't help hearing a lot of their talk. Some of them keep very quiet . . . look ashamed; some of them are honest, but scared. But some are brazen and boast of their practices. Some of them drink a lot . . . they get around the war-time prohibition act by prescribing liquor for fake patients."

"But how can Roake keep you in his offices a good deal?"

Ted shivered and drew his coat closer, although the day was warm. The doctor sat expectant. Then, as Ted did not reply, the doctor leaned toward him and laid a hand upon his knee. "Has he any hold?" he asked.

Ted gasped and shrank away, his eyes wide and staring. A great fear seemed to possess him, and he trembled violently. "Good God, Doc, don't say that I told you anything! . . ."

"Not a word, be assured. You need not tell me anything further."

"Doc . . . forget all I've said! Only tell me, is there any hope . . . for me to . . . outlast the war?"

The doctor's eyes grew moist. "I can't say, my boy."

"Can anybody, Doc? Can anybody help me?"

The doctor shook his head. "Your malady," he said sadly, "is not physical, it is of the soul. I can do nothing for you. *Materia medica* is helpless."

"Is there nobody who can help me? . . . nobody?"

The pleading look in Ted's deep-sunk eyes and cavernous face brought a lump again into the doctor's throat. It was the despair of the shadowless inmates of the Dantean hell. He rose and went to a window. The plaintive wail of *"Where Is My Wandering Boy To-night?"* rose from a Salvation Army corps in the street below. A dull-eyed, listless group of corner-loafers stood gawking at the singers. The metallic twang of the guitar, the tinkling rattle of the tambourine, the musicless thud of the big drum jarred upon the doctor's taut nerves. After twenty centuries of Christianity must the healing message of "Peace on earth . . ." be delivered with such material accompaniments and with no demonstration of "signs following"? What hope was there in such hand-to-mouth methods? It was right, indeed, that they should be concerned for the alleviation of the slum-monger's distresses; but what did they do—what *could* they do—to blot such distresses from human consciousness? Must the helpless and hopeless still be scared into

beliefs in a material heaven and a literal hell, and be given a pittance of creature comforts for the transmuting bread of life? There was something wrong, ah, dreadfully wrong in the human interpretation of the Christ-message! Else would that youth sitting there with the sentence of death on his feverish brow . . .

The doctor turned. "I know of but one person on earth who can help you," he said in a trembling voice. "Marian Whittier."

A cry burst from Ted. "She tried to help me . . . but it was with *religion!*"

"And you rejected her? Then," said the doctor, averting his head to hide his brimming eyes, "there is nothing to do but await the end."

CHAPTER 21

IT was a momentous cast of the die that Doctor Benson had made, and this fact was borne home to him when, on the day following his talk with Ted Sayor, he sat facing Alden Cragg across his old, worn table, and heard statements that left him gaping. He had sent for Alden in the hope of discovering Marian's whereabouts, and this in Ted Sayor's behalf. But he did not deny that he had likewise a personal motive, for, facing the probable consequences of his refusal to join the Roake organization, he had sore need of every available support.

"I was impressed by your talk in the Glass theater," he said. "The devil himself seems to be at work stirring up hatred that, after this present war, will plunge the United States into war with England unless checked. I believe you put your finger squarely upon it. I believe the good Lord sent you to the theater that afternoon. I am with you. But what can we do? Is there anybody we can go after?"

"I am not persecuting any man," Alden replied quickly. "I could not work that way. Destroying human beings does not destroy evil. But evil can be made to destroy itself."

"Ah, so that's your method of procedure, eh? But how can the evil be made to commit suicide?"

Alden shook his head. "I cannot say," he replied.

"But if you knew positively that some certain person was the cause of a diabolical movement, such as fomenting war between us and England, you would advocate arresting him, wouldn't you?"

"To imprison the man would not stop the movement. That which causes the movement is impersonal."

"True," the doctor admitted with some exasperation; "but you can't arrest ideas. . ."

"Yes, you can. And you can destroy them, if they are false. They can be brought to trial and made to suffer capital punishment."

Doctor Benson looked at Alden queerly. "H'm!" he said, after a considerable pause. "That's a new one."

"No, it is not," Alden replied. "It goes back at least as far as the time of Jesus. Indeed, one of the greatest mistakes mankind have made is that of trying to separate between the sin and the sinner. The sin itself *is* the sinner. And it is the sin that must be dealt with."

"H'm!" said the doctor again. "Well, it's true that hanging criminals doesn't destroy crime."

"And the criminal is not the sinner. The real criminal is the aggressive suggestion that comes to him in the guise of good and whispers that some benefit is to be gained by committing the crime."

"True, speaking metaphysically. But, practically . . ."

"The world is at last slowly learning that *the metaphysical is the only really practical,*" Alden declared. "The Bible is a closed book and Christianity but dead ceremony unless metaphysically interpreted and employed."

"Then, for example, if we do not approve of—well, let us say, the Roake plan, the idea would not be to knock Roake on the head, but to devise some scheme of overthrowing the plan, eh? Or, better, antidote it, as it were. That's why you were so courageous in the Glass theater, eh? But I think you were foolhardy, for that little talk is going to cost you dear. And yet, there is no one else who would have dared take the stand you took."

Alden looked up at the doctor. "Yes, there is," he said. "Marian Whittier."

"That's right!" the doctor ejaculated. "And now I want to find her. Where is she?"

"In Persia," Alden answered in a low tone.

"Persia! Well, what is she doing there?"

"Tracing the route of the lost ten tribes of Israel."

"Tracing the . . ." The doctor's eyes bulged and he sat back staring at Alden. Then a look of suspicion crept into his face. He had heard the rumor that Alden Cragg was mentally unsound. . .

"It is Truth alone that will destroy false ideas," Alden went on. "The tracing of the English back to Israel will strengthen the bond between England and the United States, and the . . ."

A look of comprehension came into the doctor's face and

he sat up quickly. "By heaven!" he cried, "it may be that therein lies the solution of the whole trouble. And that girl saw this long ago and has done the only thing possible to meet it! A clever girl! A wonderful girl! A . . . But what are you going to do now?"

"I am working with her," said Alden quietly.

"By heaven!" again exclaimed the doctor. "I understand now! But look out! While you're waiting for evil to commit suicide, these fellows will have you in an asylum, or worse! The movement that you are opposing is far more widespread than you probably think, and it is thoroughly entrenched! Your opposition may cost you your freedom! . . ."

"I am not afraid," said Alden quietly.

"And if they don't railroad you into a madhouse they'll drop you."

"I do not fear death."

"You don't, eh? Why?"

"I have met it," was the calm reply.

The doctor sat bolt upright. "You . . . you have *met* it!" . . .

But the arrival of a patient at that moment interrupted the conversation, and Alden, reminding the doctor that he was a chauffeur and that his time was not his own, took his leave.

Hours afterward the doctor sat musing over the odd interview. "He was reported dead, in Palestine," he reflected. "He is very much alive now, that's certain! And yet he's not the same; he's completely changed, doesn't even look the same. He used to be an unbearable cad, a measly coward, a . . . Now he's all tenderness, humility, but, Lord! there's strength underneath it! Is it because he lost his money and had to become a chauffeur? No; *something* happened over there. . . And I'd give ten years of my life to know what it was."

And Doctor Roake would have made, and gladly, a similar bargain. Failing the opportunity, however, he concentrated his thought upon the psychological aspects of the strange case and their bearing upon his own activities. Alden had suddenly developed unwonted force of character: whither might it not lead? The development had taken place since his association with Madam Galuth: what might that portend? But the doctor had long desired a deeper acquaintance with this woman's character: and was not Alden now furnishing it? The doctor could afford to wait patiently. He was certain that Alden's audacious accusations made in the Glass theater had been successfully antidoted—a man in the doctor's public position was always subject to attacks from the fanatical. And the people believed that Alden's war experience and the vicissitudes which

he had been summoned to bear in these past few months had disturbed the delicate balance of his mind.

From Harris Chaddock the doctor had secured an outline of Alden's audacious conduct in Florida. The doctor had communicated with the rector since Alden's return to Crestelridge, and he had written a congratulatory letter to Doctor Rowley, in which he rejoiced in the latter's highly successful conduct of Ethel's case—"a notable triumph for medicine," he wrote—and expressed the desire to know him better. He had said little to Harris, and the latter was kept in an endless quandary as to just how much the doctor knew regarding himself and Ethel.

And yet Harris was fain to believe that the doctor was highly sympathetic toward them both, for he let fall a remark one day that was more than an indication thereof. "Poor girl," the doctor had observed, after passing some further comment on Ethel's recovery, "she is more sinned against than sinning." And then, while Harris' ears hung wide, the doctor casually referred to certain rumors regarding Alden's association with Marian Whittier in Palestine—rumors which dropped into Harris' hungry soul like manna. "And you recall Alden's remarks in St. Jude's parish house, when he said: 'To me there came, *through the love of another,* the Christ'," the doctor concluded. "Through the *love* of another. . . H'm!"

The doctor had not mentioned the affront which Alden had offered in wiring him from Florida that his services were not required for Ethel. Indeed, but for a slight heightening of the color in his cheeks at the time, one would have said that the message had not touched him. Nor, beyond the impatience—rather than anger—which the doctor had manifested in the Glass theater, had there been any outward indication that he had been stirred by that incident. But it was a matter of comment among those closely associated with him that of late he had seemed more absorbed, more reticent, possibly a trifle less genial; and some had remarked that the tremendous load which he was carrying was too great for anyone less than superhuman.

To Harris Chaddock, the doctor's acceptance of Alden Cragg's affronts appeared inexplicable. "The Whittiers and Rowley were mush in Cragg's hands," he mentally commented; "and is it possible that he has Roake hypnotized too? The whelp! Why did I let him throw me out? But he was acting like a mad bull; he flabbergasted me with his sudden change of front. But I'll play with him now for a while! And he wired Roake not to come—Lord above! Lucky for him he had a good doctor in Rowley—I'll say that much, even if Rowley did turn me down. God! . . . it's been a damned nasty mess,

and I hope I've heard the last of it! Ethel would divorce him if she had half a case. . . And by the gods I believe she has now!" . . . And so impressed did he become through reflection on the doctor's remarks in regard to Alden and Marian in Palestine that shortly thereafter he slipped away and boarded a train for Florida, with the doctor's fertile suggestion packed securely away in the back of his seething mind. . .

Although it was midsummer, and Crestelridge fain would have dozed as was its invariable wont, despite the crash of war without, nevertheless there were certain events forward that kept it quite awake. And not the least significant of these was the Primal Motors episode—as spectacular as it was fruitful. It was to be expected, of course, that in the moment of greatest quiet the watchful speculators in this always attractive stock would be alert to any advantage; and apparently an advantage was now discerned, for, almost coincident with the announcement by the press of Ethel's grave illness, a flurry in Primal Motors had been observed on 'Change. And upon the reopening of the Stock Exchange after the National holiday, it was noted that such old warriors as Henry Tellus, and Black, and Kerl, and others of their cronies, were back from their seaside resorts and in harness. For the flurry was fast developing into a decided movement.

There were many attracted to this movement, like moths to a candle, but of them all probably Ted Sayor was the only one who could not afterward remember just how it had been brought to his attention. He believed that Doctor Roake had remarked in his presence that there would doubtless be considerable speculating in the stock, and that there was a rare opportunity now for one "on the inside" to clean up a fortune. "On the inside" meant the favor of such as Senator Chaddock, who was purchasing additional stock in the corporation to recoup the Cragg fortune. "When the estate returns to Alden," Ted thought he overheard Doctor Roake say, "it will be vastly greater than now."

Ted's necessities were wholly spiritual, yet he saw them only as physical and financial: and in both of these he confessed himself woefully "short". Therefore, when Doctor Roake casually inquired of him if he was dabbling in Primal Motors, he determined, as he informed the brokers whom Senator Chaddock sent to him on his request, to "take a flyer". Whereupon, the senator advised him to proceed cautiously, and to purchase but a few thousand shares to sell on the rising market which now seemed assured.

It was the one bright spot that had appeared in Ted's dun sky for many a day when his brokers announced to him that

they had purchased 5,000 shares of the stock in the Primal Motors Corporation on his account at 110 and on the verbal assurance that it would be delivered to him at a slightly higher figure in case it continued to rise, and that they had immediately sold it at a price that would net him a handsome profit. "It means a recoup," sighed Ted. "It means Arizona and health. It means life, when I can break away from . . . *him!*"

But of a sudden Primal Motors advanced sharply, quite beyond expectations. Ted's brokers hurried to demand the stock for him to deliver: he could break just even then. But to the consternation of the brokers they discovered that the oral assurances which had been given them could not be fulfilled, for not a share of the stock was to be had.

Ted laughed. "Well, I won't have to deliver what I can't get," he said, as he watched the ticker in the International Club with something akin to amusement. "But," his brokers quickly informed him, "the purchaser of the stock which you sold demands immediate delivery! We're caught! . . . squeezed! A clique has cornered the market and won't release a share!"

"Who bought from me?" Ted asked. And the name of a powerful and wholly unscrupulous trader was given him. . .

Again the stock advanced; and then, a few days later, and quite without warning, it abruptly soared, soared pyrotechnically and with such momentum that it rested not until it touched 300. Ted's brokers were frantic: their own reputation was at stake.

The stock leaped to 400. Ted's loss was appalling. He laughed again, and wondered vaguely if the residue of his estate would total so much.

"We will demand an embargo on trading in the securities of Primal Motors!" the brokers cried, for 'Change was going wild. And they did. But, despite the embargo which the board of governors placed on trading in the securities, despite the frenzy, despite the swelling and dwindling of fortunes over night, trading went briskly on "over the counter", and the stock went to 800.

At this point the directors of the Primal Motors Corporation calmly announced the July stock dividend of a share to each share held. The price jumped to 1,000. And settlement was finally made on that basis. The press ran great headlines, and hourly "extras" were published. Society hurried back from the summer resorts agog.

"How much stock did you say Henry holds?" Mrs. Kerl excitedly asked of Mrs. Tellus.

"Heavens, I don't know!" was that exulting lady's reply. "But I do know that we've made millions, simply *millions!*"

"But did you hear that the Cragg estate had been caught?"

"Yes!" Her voice fell to an awed whisper. "Senator Chaddock was trying to build it up, you know, and he bought heavily and sold short. Couldn't get a share of the stock. Showed frightfully poor judgment. It finishes poor insane Alden. But there are others holding the bag, Henry says."

"Who?" Mrs. Kerl asked anxiously.

"They say Ted Sayor is," Mrs. Tellus replied. "Caught for an awful amount—I don't know how much, but Henry says Ted's ruined. Think of it, the Sayor and Cragg fortunes *simply wiped out!*"

Mrs. Kerl caught her breath. "Oh!" she gasped.

"Of course," Mrs. Tellus went on, "I don't care anything about Alden, but I'm sorry for poor Ted. He's a good fellow, and he's sick and can't go to work. I can't imagine what will become of him now."

"Well," put in Mrs. Black, "we have the war to thank for this. Government contracts made Primal Motors possible."

"Humph!" Mrs. Tellus returned, with a shrug of her shoulders. "Henry says it wasn't the war or the Government, but a poor Jew, David Barach. He invented the motor and took it to Henry. You remember him, don't you? Made a disturbance in St. Jude's last year. He's in the war now."

"Well, anyway," gurgled Mrs. Nence, "it's all been just wonderful! And wasn't it exciting? . . . I ordered two new cars to-day!". . .

As the Primal Motors coup passed into history, Crestelridge society recovered its breath and prepared to settle back into its well-oiled grooves. But almost immediately it received a succession of sharp shocks in a series of startling events that rudely dispelled its dream of lethargy and left it gaping. The first of these was the report that Ethel was securing a divorce from Alden Cragg. . . "And—can you believe it?—on the ground of *unfaithfulness!*" declared the questionably rich Mrs. Dodd. "And the co-respondent—of all persons!—Marian Whittier! Won't this be rich?"

"Lovely!" agreed Mrs. Nence, trembling with delight. "I do hope I can go to the trial every day!"

"But," Mrs. Tellus informed them, "Henry says that the plea will be incompatibility. Alden will not contest the suit if brought on that charge."

"Oh, how disappointing!" sighed Mrs. Nence, quite crestfallen.

"Humph!" grunted Mrs. Dodd, "he does that to protect Marian's name. I always knew she would bear watching. He has no case; why, they *lived* together in Jerusalem!"

"Heavens, you don't mean it!". . .

And with much whispering and significant shakes of the head they set about arranging for detailed news service, for, to their added disappointment, the suit was to be brought in Florida and Ethel would not return to Crestelridge until it was settled.

On the heels of this came the information that Alden Cragg had deeded the Cragg pew back to St. Jude's. "And a good thing he did!" was Mrs. Kerl's vehement comment, "for I for one would have resigned my membership if he hadn't!"

"But how can the rector be reconciled to Ethel's divorce?" queried someone. "Marriage is a sacred sacrament, you know. The Church doesn't recognize divorce."

"Oh," laughed another, "the rector is being forced to become modern. Why, the divorce laws are the prop of civilization! If I thought I had to stay tied to my bear of a husband all my life I'd commit suicide—or murder!"

"You are right. Divorce is not a question to be settled by the moral code," stoutly asserted Mrs. Kerl. "A woman's a fool not to leave her husband or her children if another man comes along and offers her a better position in life, greater wealth, more culture, and an easier time."

"Then husband and children don't make it either right or wrong?"

"Certainly not! We must acquire the broader outlook. We must rise above petty values. Ethel's conduct is magnificent!"

With the shock occasioned by the divorce suit now absorbed, came another, albeit a mild one and, as society soon agreed, a negligible one, had they not become so delicately sensitive to them. This was the purchase of "Craggmont" by Doctor Roake.

"But *somebody* had to buy it!" Mrs. Tellus asserted in defense of the doctor's action. "When the Cragg estate vanished in Primal Motors, 'Craggmont' naturally was thrown upon the market. Why shouldn't the doctor buy it?"

"Surely, my dear," agreed Mrs. Kerl. "But—well, it makes one suspicious of the doctor."

"Well, if the old senator hadn't been an imbecile he'd never have been caught as he was. He used to be too sharp for such traps. Henry says Harris has taken his father to the International Club with him. Ted Sayor is in a cheap hotel; had to leave the International Club; he hasn't a cent!". . .

And meantime, on the gas-drenched, blood-soaked, rotting fields of France great lines of sweating, straining creatures swayed to and fro, with grimy hands in deadly grip on one another's throats in a cursed struggle to crush out life. That

mesmeric system by which the beast-like human has through long centuries been subdued, restrained, "refined", until it could stage the vanity fair of Crestelridge and call it "civilization", had collapsed, and the primitive beast now stood forth in all his starkness. The human sense of civilization in balance against the human sense of the primitive had revealed one equal to the other.

Alden Cragg saw in the varied activities of those about him, those driven by the lust of commercial, social, political power, naught but the swift disintegration of the human concept of mind, even as the collapse of civilization in Europe was revealing in itself the logical consequence of the ages of dense materialism on which the flimsy structure had been reared. Primitive man had been born in matter, he had sowed in matter, had exalted it, worshiped and feared it, had sought to give it life and intelligence, and had reaped death.

Amid the ruin that lay around him, Alden stood unmoved. True civilization, he well knew, had not crumbled. That which had so cruelly failed was the age-old attempt to refine the human belief in minds many, in ignorance of the stupendous fact that these are but counterfeits of the One Mind, God. The financial ruin of Ted Sayor, the mental ruin of Senator Chaddock, the moral ruin of Ethel, the subtle loosing of death-laden missiles against Marian Whittier, against himself, he knew followed logically, inevitably, upon eating the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, the human knowledge that makes matter and its loathsome train of evils as real as Spirit and that causes defiance of Principle. The struggle of the hordes in France to preserve intact a civilization founded upon such knowledge has been foredoomed from time immemorial.

In his great love for those who had been so basely betrayed, Alden again sought Ted Sayor. Upon information obtained at the International Club he found him in a dingy upper room of the same cheap little hotel where he himself had taken lodging after leaving "Craggmont".

Ted answered his knock and greeted him with a pathetic assumption of his old-time nonchalance. "I took refuge here to catch my breath and rest my feet," he smilingly explained, and speaking in the husky tones that had now become habitual to him. "I've been run through a sieve, so you see me a bit strained," casting his eyes around the dingy room. "However, we are now brothers in affliction."

"Brothers in opportunity," Alden answered, pressing Ted's thin hand tenderly. "We've both been stripped of material hindrances, so we are better able to run a good race."

Ted smiled as he dropped into a chair. "Do I look like an athlete?"

"I am not judging you according to the evidence of the physical senses, Ted. The fact of what you really *are* renders that evidence nul."

"I really am a penniless invalid, beaten in my last throw for life."

"I cannot accept your judgment of yourself," Alden protested earnestly. "Oh, Ted, look up! The way of escape is open!"

Again Ted smiled wanly. "Can I escape from . . . *myself?*"

"Not from your *real* self, but certainly from the false concept of self that you are holding and manifesting."

Ted shook his head. "I'm not strong enough to-day to argue philosophy with you," he said; "and if you talk religion you'll have to go. I couldn't stand it."

"But won't you let me help you? Won't you take my hand and walk with me?"

"Lord, Aldy-boy! you mean all right, but what could you do?"

"Of myself, nothing, but . . ."

"There you go again! Now don't, I beg of you! You got that evangelistic stuff in the war, but you must remember that I haven't been exposed to it." His voice dropped to a feverish whisper. "I wasn't accepted, you know. You understand, don't you, that they rejected me because I was tubercular? I . . . I want people to get that right. The meanest man produced by the war is the 'conscientious objector', you know. He's a . . . a slacker . . . a skunk! . . . Roake. . ." He started at his own utterance of the name, and threw a furtive glance at Alden. Then, pulling himself together with an effort and forcing a smile: "Forget the war, Aldy-boy. I'm not interested. . . I say, it certainly was artistic, the way I was trimmed in Primal Motors. I haven't recovered from the shock . . . I wasn't prepared for it as you were. It . . . it's unbelievable, the way our stars have fallen! I find it hard to . . . to adjust myself to my altered circumstances."

He glanced about the room and shivered. Where once he had lounged among rare rugs, rich hangings, luxurious furniture, with eager servants to meet his every whim, with wealth apparently inexhaustible in the banks to maintain him in gilded ease, now a single inner room, shabby and unclean, housed him. A worn and faded carpet covered the creaking floor. Torn, dirty curtains drooped in sickly fashion before unclean windows that gave upon a noisome, ill-smelling court. The rich viands of the International Club had been exchanged for the scant and badly cooked menu served by slatternly waiters in the hot, fly-infested dining room below. . .

"Sometimes," Ted murmured, "I wake up with a start and call for Boots . . . dear old Boots . . . It's all a dream now . . . but those were gay, careless days. . . I always think I'm going to wake and find myself strumming on the piano in 'Craggmont', or driving my car . . . That last car, Aldy-boy . . . it was a marvel! The chassis alone cost twenty thousand . . . I had the body specially built. . ."

"Ted, *awake!*"

Ted raised his head. "Why, Aldy-boy, you're cruel!" he protested. "Let me dream. It's all that's left now."

"Your dream is suicidal, Ted! It is death! Wake! Break the bonds of your slavery!"

Ted pulled himself up and stared hard at Alden. "What . . . what are you driving at?" he whispered hoarsely. "You are becoming personal."

"It is because of my love for you, Ted! I would release you from your slavery!"

Ted gasped. "Slavery!" he cried huskily. "God . . . that's it! But you can't help me! No one is to blame but myself! . . . And I'm doomed! *Doomed!*"

"You are not, Ted, unless you doom yourself! Come," Alden urged, getting to his feet and extending his hands, "let me lead you to freedom! Come! Come!"

For a moment a light glowed in Ted's straining eyes; the color came again into his face; he sat up, seized the arms of his chair and half rose. . .

Then his head fell forward and he sank back. "No," he muttered, "no, I can't! Yes, it's slavery! It's the penalty I'm paying. . . You escaped, but I was caught! The old senator and I . . . we were caught! . . ."

"The senator?"

"You haven't seen him lately? He's a wreck . . . God! a maudlin wreck! But he doesn't know why . . . And *I* do! *He* didn't put through the Primal Motors deal . . . oh, no, not he! He didn't even handle my part in it, oh, no! He couldn't, for he falls asleep if you look at him! He can't concentrate . . . can't complete a sentence that he starts! He follows Roake around like a dog! . . . Sits on the doctor's doorstep waiting for him. He mumbles as he walks, mumbles! I tell you he *mumbles!* . . ."

"Ted!" cried Alden, bending forward and seizing Ted's hand, "what do you mean?"

For a few moments Ted lay back with eyes closed. Then he roused up and smiled feebly. "I . . . I got a bit . . . excited, didn't I? But . . . forget it. It was good of you to come to see me . . . poor fallen me. Let's talk about old times.

It's months since I've seen the old crowd. I shall not see them again . . . now." His voice sank low. "I wonder if they ever miss me . . . Louise, Madeline . . . I'd like one more dinner at Leroux's. . ."

"Come, we'll go there now."

Ted shook his head. "I'm economizing . . . temporarily. And I know you are, too. So I couldn't go as your guest. Please . . ." He put a hand to his chest. "That bottle there, and the spoon," indicating these articles on an adjacent table. "Roake will ask me if I've taken it regularly. . ."

"He is treating you? Oh, Ted, break away! Break away! Come with me! . . ."

"Impossible . . . now. Don't . . . please!"

"And you will not let me help you? Ted . . ."

"No, no, there is nothing you can do . . . unless you can bring my money back."

"I can give you more than money. . ."

Ted held up a hand and smiled feebly. "Don't, Aldy-boy. You can't evangelize me. There, get that sanctimonious look off your face."

A look of sadness and great compassion came into Alden's features as he stood yearning over Ted. Then he sighed and moved away. But he turned and thrust a hand into a pocket. "I want to help you until you get on your feet," he said gently. "You said you were penniless. . ."

Ted drew himself up sharply. "No Sayor has ever begged!" he asserted with dignity. "The fellows at the club would have helped me, if I had wished it."

"But this will be a loan. . ."

"No, I will not take a penny!"

"But, Ted, obstinacy, stubbornness, and pride are the great walls that shut out good."

Ted forced another weak smile. "Don't worry about me, Aldy-boy . . . I . . . I'll wait a bit . . . then I'll get work of some kind. And don't say anything to anybody about seeing me to-day. . . I don't want the old crowd to . . . to know I'm . . . here."

A sound of loud voices came filtering through the thin partition from an adjoining room. Ted glanced quickly in that direction and shivered. "Medical inspectors," he muttered, shrinking into his chair and meeting Alden's look of inquiry.

A woman's voice rose shrilly. "Are we mothers to have no say as to our children? Are they to be vaccinated and inoculated and operated upon whenever you so decide? Then what are we parents for?"

"You are to bring the children into the world, and feed and

clothe them; but when it comes to their medical care, we doctors will dictate that."

Alden started. He recognized the voice: it was Harris Chaddock's. He turned and caught Ted's eyes bent fearfully on him.

"They've been hanging around here watching that child," Ted whispered. "Some malicious person reported that it was a diphtheria 'carrier'. The child hasn't been sick, but . . . It's the Spanish Inquisition all over!"

"Here now, we'll have no nonsense! . . ." Harris Chaddock's voice boomed through the light wall. It was followed by the banging of a door, by sounds of a struggle, and a woman's agonized cry. "Doctor! For God's sake don't take my baby! . . . Not to the pesthouse! . . . Not to the County Hospital! . . ." A child's screams rent the air.

Alden sprang to the door and threw it open. In the hallway a burly police officer was tearing a girl of some eight years from the clutches of her frantic mother, while Harris Chaddock was brutally attempting to pull the mother away and force her back into her room.

With the appearance of Alden, the actors in the tragedy in the hallway seemed to become transmuted into inanimate images. Then, slowly, the policeman relaxed. Quickly the child slipped from his grasp and ran to her mother. And Harris, recovering from his astonishment, pushed forward and confronted Alden.

"So-o-o! It's the little soldier-boy! Maybe we've got the wrong 'carrier', eh? We had you up once before. I think we'll look you over again. . ." He turned to the officer. "Bring him along, too," he commanded.

The policeman reached again for the child; but the mother, who had been drawing the child slowly back, quickly thrust her into the room and, springing after her, slammed and locked the door in the officer's face. He turned and ran to the window at the end of the hall. "She's carrying the kid down the fire-escape!" he cried. And he rushed down the hallway to the stairs to intercept her.

"Damn you!" cried Harris, wheeling menacingly upon Alden. "You'll pay for this! Interfering with the law. . ."

"Come in here, Harris," said Alden in a low, calm voice. "This is Ted Sayor's room. I want to talk with you." And he smiled as he spoke.

Harris' eyes grew suddenly big. For a moment fear dominated him. The things he intended to say remained unsaid; the deeds he would have performed failed. And he stood staring into Alden's calm face.

Then Alden turned and entered Ted's room. Perspiration broke out over Harris. His anger had fled before his sudden fear, and now his fear had vanished and given place to a great, compelling curiosity. He was drawn; he could not resist; and he followed Alden.

"I . . . I had forgotten that you . . . were in this place," he said, as his eyes fell upon Ted. And he appeared embarrassed.

"Ted is going to give us his room for a few minutes," Alden continued. "There is a bench down at the end of the corridor, Ted. Will you wait there for me? Thank you," as Ted, marveling greatly, slowly rose to comply. Then Alden closed the door behind him and faced Harris.

CHAPTER 22

IT has been said that mortals would be better if they knew how. And surely Doctor Roake, typifying liberated mortal mind, would not have placed such high value on the dross of life had he not in ignorance yielded his mentality to the clamoring brood of false suggestions that swarmed upon him in the guise of personal good. Rarely gifted and endowed above his fellow men, he might have found true satisfaction in the service of mankind, rather than in that of self. Had he known that he would discover his own greatest good only in the good of others, he surely would have conserved the interest of public health by conceding freedom of action to those who disagreed with his changeful theories and his doubtful methods.

But through the various departments of health, in which he was becoming a dominant factor, he was steadily prostituting his high calling to the lowest animal lusts. By fear, and the riveting of public attention upon discord, he had become a dangerous means of disseminating sickness rather than a promoter of real wholeness. His widespread propaganda was an education of the masses in the horrors of disease, rather than in the harmonies of health. And his methods, now becoming ever more daring, more flagrantly abusive of human rights, were taking the form of a ruthless coercion which, pursued to its logical conclusion, must eventuate in the complete subversion of popular government unless the mesmeric spell which he was casting over the people should be broken.

The most recent manifestation of his rapidly increasing tyranny was the issuance of mandatory cards to parents, requiring, under penalty, that they submit their children to the med-

ical attention of the local board of health. It was a measure that had met with dissent by members of the board itself; yet these, though they feared the effects of the drastic measure, stood in greater fear of incurring the doctor's disapproval, and they therefore silently concurred in the assumption of autocratic control which he insisted that the board should thenceforth increasingly manifest.

It was true that the functions now so dogmatically exercised by Doctor Roake through this supine board far exceeded those outlined by the state legislature; but the doctor smilingly explained that he was but anticipating the passage of certain benevolent legislation that would place the stamp of legality upon his medical procedure. He did not, however, adumbrate the fact that this procedure infringed every moral right of man. And thus it was that the board of health in Crestelridge became actually legislative—a precedent which Doctor Roake expected to see adopted universally.

The appointment of Dr. Harris Chaddock as the health executive under the new Wess law had aroused the adverse criticism of many, including physicians, many of whom felt—as Doctor Benson did not hesitate to proclaim—that "a good hack driver was spoiled when Harris was made a doctor." Yet in the face of this disagreement Doctor Roake calmly arrogated to himself complete control over the welfare of the community and launched his remarkable religio-medical plan. This was quickly followed by the enlisting of the masses in his various health institutes; by the thorough organization of the women in a frenzy of health-seeking for the home; by health councils in all important centers; by a flamboyant proposal of a world-health council to be held in Washington; and, not the least, by securing the ministers through his skillful deleting of the menacing "Union for Christian Healing". The doctors were not slow to see that the autocracy which they had hitherto been enjoying must soon be yielded to the more widespread autocracy of the Roake plan, if they themselves would survive; while the laity, beguiled by the promised stirring of Bethesda's waters, scampered down pellmell to be the first to lave in the healing flood.

In fealty to Doctor Roake, Harris Chaddock had shown himself as remarkable as his father. His zeal had been such that he fain would have overridden all opposition to the doctor's medical legislation with bayonets. Nor could it be said that in the literal fulfillment of his duties as health executive he had been remiss. In the execution of such mandates as the haling of recalcitrant objectors to a summary justice, he was positively fanatical. If the mother of the child whom he was deter-

mined to isolate as a "carrier" interposed resistance, she was in his sight as criminal as the highwayman.

Yet withal, his abuse of his authority and privilege was notorious. He was human, with every tendency a downward one toward sheer animality. Arbitrary power wrought his speedy ruin. In battening on the necessities of his fellow men he became a conscienceless cannibal. In his lust for money his soul rotted. He had that very day hurried a patient off to a confederate for an operation, his diagnosis of appendicitis being based solely on abdominal pains following dietetic indiscretion. That the patient died under the needless operation by a bungling novice was not a matter of conscience to him: his first query thereafter concerned only his fee.

His determination to possess Ethel Whittier had not balked at employment of the foulest means; yet it was based on no consideration for the girl, who so blindly believed she loved him, but on an obsessing regard for her financial prospects as Penberry's heiress. His lusting sentiments, which he ignorantly sought to dignify as love, inclined him rather toward such as Fay Meuse; and upon this outcast woman he brazenly lavished the most marked attentions. It was not strange, therefore, that within the cramped soul of Fay Meuse there should have developed a sense of proprietorship over Harris Chaddock, and that it should have led to complications which, now that Ethel was securing her freedom from Alden, were proving embarrassing.

And yet Doctor Roake had rather encouraged Harris in his conduct toward this woman, even as the great doctor had winked at his unethical practices. This had stimulated Harris to even greater defiance of moral restraint. It had greatly swelled his estimate of self. It had increased his blatant self-adulation. For the younger man, now fully mesmerized, was wholly deficient in the subtlety of his powerful superior, else he might have discerned the goal through the winding maze that the doctor was threading, with him as a guidepost, one of many. He might have seen himself a mere factor in the doctor's intricate proof of the odd premise announced to Senator Chaddock on that windy night when the Cragg memorial bell had cracked: that "evil thought is demonstrably more powerful than good"—a premise on which the life-activities of Doctor Roake had been frankly based.

As Alden faced him, his back to the door, Harris' heart leaped into his throat. That uncanny "something" about that tall, gray figure, that "something", fear-inspiring, menacingly prophetic of judgment, was again manifesting. He wondered vaguely through his sudden fear if Doctor Roake had felt that

subtle influence, and if it was that which had caused the doctor to refuse Harris' plea that Alden be brought to trial for sanity. This creature that had come back from the flames of war had again assumed the appearance of a thing intangible, disembodied. And to Harris, as he now stood staring with bulging eyes, came chilling thoughts of death.

"Harris," the sepulchral tones seemed to drift slowly down through endless corridors of unrecorded time, "Harris, why will you die?"

Harris felt his blood turn to ice. Did this unearthly creature intend to murder him?—as by the human code Alden Cragg had full right! He struggled to move, to flee, as one struggles in a nightmare; yet he stood rooted to the spot.

"I know your thoughts; they will manifest in death. I know your ways; they are leading but to death. And I know that the end is upon you."

Perspiration poured over Harris; his face went white; weakness smote him, and he clutched at a chair.

"I am not ignorant of your doings—I say *your* doings, for you would not understand me if I spoke impersonally of the evil that uses you. I know that you sent David Barach to slay me in 'No Man's Land'; I know that you betrayed our friendship and brought Ethel to death's threshold; I know that her babe—and yours—was slain by the mental assassin; I know that you have been a ready tool to work death's deeds, and that, your usefulness past, you will soon be melted in the furnace of death; I know that you have sought to besmirch Marian Whittier's fair name, and that upon your foul charges Ethel seeks release from me—Ethel, who has just been brought up out of the valley of death whither the mental assassin drove her, whither you are being driven, though you know it not; I know that gladly would you declare me insane, though you know not that the mesmerism of evil has stolen your own mind, your own soul, your sense of the right and the true. . ."

Harris stood with knees bent and mouth agape, steadying himself by the chair. He would have cried out if he had possessed the strength. Alden appeared to him to be transfigured: he saw him standing like a towering patriarch, in robes of white, while from his mouth rolled words that carried doom.

"On Egypt's border . . ." Again that awful voice rolled over the cringing Harris. ". . . stands an altar to the God whom you deny. The human mind has reversed its meaning, as the human mind reverses all Truth, and has made of it a tomb. Down the long inclined way into that altar you are traveling, driven by the evil dragon star. Before you yawns the bottomless pit. . ."

"Good God!" Harris, with a wrench, broke the spell. "Do you intend to *kill* me?"

"No. You are killing yourself. I would have you turn, ere too late. Turn, Harris, *turn!* For death's hand is even now upon your shoulder!

"Yet you may escape. For above you is the tortuous way that leads to the Christ-resurrection from material beliefs and their endless woes. You cannot go forward but into the pit. Turn, therefore, and start upward! In the name of the One God, I call upon you to turn! The upward way is long for you; but unless you turn and begin the toilsome journey now, death shall soon engulf you, and the hell of the knowledge of the nothingness of your worldly aims and ways will torment you with unbearable anguish!"

He paused. Then a look of great tenderness spread over his face. He advanced a step and held out his hands. "Harris, I have seen . . . death. I would save you from the suffering that I drew upon myself. I have sought to save Ethel, to protect her, and you. I do not live for myself but for such as you and Ethel. Oh, Harris, let me give you what I have found, for I have found Life! You are entering death. . ."

"You . . . you threaten *me?*" burst from Harris. Anger now mingled with his fear and lent him its false stimulus.

"Death threatens you."

"I knew you were up to deviltry! Now you've confessed it! You've lied to me; now you threaten me!"

"Harris . . ." The tones were now low and pleading. "I do not condemn you. It was the suggestion of evil that caused you to commit such crimes against me, against Ethel, against yourself. We are not enemies, for in the mental realm into which I would lead you these do not exist. Harris, take my hand; turn, and come with me. Break the mesmeric bonds that now hold you."

A sneer came into Harris' face. His confidence had returned. "Why don't you drop your sentimental nonsense and get to the point and ask me to give Ethel back to you? You want old Penberry's money now, eh? since you've been skinned! You sly, lying dog! Do you think Ethel would live with a cowardly cur like you? Do you think you can keep her from me with your little threats?"

"I shall not keep her from you, Harris. But your ways and your thoughts shall."

Harris' anger flamed into sudden rage, fanned by his mounting fear. And fear blew wide the portals of his mind to thoughts of murder. "You lie!" he cried, advancing threateningly. "All that you have said about me is a mess of lies!

David Barach . . . the dirty Jew! If he tried to get you, it was because you killed his wife! Oh, I know a lot about you! I know a lot about you and Marian Whit . . ."

"Stop!"

Harris halted, with the word on his lips. Then he broke into a low laugh. "Gets you, eh? Strikes home, eh? Oh, yes, Ethel divorces you because of *incompatibility*, but the people have had a different story from me!"

With a sudden rush he threw himself full upon Alden. . .

Then that long, white figure seemed to open and envelop him. His hot breath gurgled in his tightening throat and stopped. The room appeared to swim, to grow black, and he saw himself in a long, low passageway, struggling upward through the darkness toward a star that mocked him. And he was slipping . . . slipping . . .

Slowly his eyes opened, and breath returned to him in a great, rending sob. He was lying on the floor, and Alden Cragg —yet not Alden, but the incarnation of righteous judgment— stood flaming above him. Paralyzing fear gripped his heart. "God's sake, Cragg . . . don't kill me! I didn't mean . . ."

"You call on the God whom you have scorned and mocked! So evil always does when facing death!"

"Cragg . . . Alden . . . don't do it . . . it was all a lie . . . I lied . . . I did it on account of . . . Ethel . . . you can't blame me . . . she loves me . . . for her sake . . . Alden. . ." His words clogged in his throat, and he lay whimpering before the awful moral quality of the force that had felled him.

Then Alden's countenance altered, and a look of compassion came into it. Tears filled his eyes. He bent and grasped Harris' waving hand. "I am sorry, Harris," he said brokenly. He lifted the fallen man to his feet. "Evil is never crushed by brute force. Oh, Harris, could you but know what came through *her* to me when death had borne me off in triumph! Yet it is only what I long to give you. Harris . . ." He again held out his arms toward the shrinking man. "Harris, hear me! Forsake your ways that are bringing destruction upon you! Turn! turn! I am here to help you! The hour is sounding! Turn and do good, or death awaits you in the path that you are treading!"

"He's . . . insane! . . . crazy!" Harris muttered. For Alden's strength could be that of a madman only. Harris stood casting fearful glances about the room. There was nothing that he could use as a weapon. . .

Then Alden went to the door and opened it. "You need not fear, Harris," he said gently, as he stood back and held the door wide.

Harris started. He moved forward, keeping his eyes fastened upon Alden, he slunk by him, then darted through the door and hurried shivering down the hall.

Alden's head dropped upon his breast. And he stood thus until roused by Ted Sayor. "The policeman came back, but I told him Harris had gone," Ted related with a smile. "I lied. . ."

"Yes, Ted," Alden murmured wearily; "but human existence is all a lie about Truth. Oh, that you would see it! That Harris would! That the world . . ."

He checked himself and put an arm about Ted's shoulders. "I leave you with God, Ted," he said softly. "May we both know that we are always with Him." Then he turned away.

CHAPTER 23

"REMARKABLE receptivity!" was Doctor Roake's inaudible comment, as he reflected on the manifested effects of suggestion on the mentalities of those concerned in that summer's interesting series of events. "It is clearly demonstrated that the mind most susceptible to suggestion is the one most completely absorbed in self. In this respect, Alden Cragg appears to have manifested a reversal. But that, I insist, is due to something that happened to him in Europe. He came under the influence of Marian Whittier. But how?—for he strongly resisted her here. And the nature of that influence? Remarkable! And, from the standpoint of science, absorbingly interesting. But I shall know . . . I shall know. . . If she would return here . . . If I could bring her back. And she would come, I believe, for Alden—but for nobody else. But . . . how?"

With regard to Marian Whittier the doctor could learn but bafflingly little. The Penberry Ambulance Corps was still active in Palestine, but he was certain from indefinite reports that Marian was not with it. As for Simeon Penberry, London agents informed the doctor that the old gentleman was not at Penberry Hall. But that was as far as their advice went. But all this was not as mystifying as Otto Hoeffel's continued silence. And the doctor shook his head often in deepest perplexity.

With respect to Ethel too the doctor felt that there was still much to be revealed, particularly in regard to her illness in Florida. Harris had been widely loquacious concerning Alden's conduct there, but singularly reticent as to details that the

doctor was eager to learn—details that would now be his, but for Alden. And the sting of his rejection by the latter was deeply poignant.

Nor did the rector reveal anything of an illuminating nature in his letters of reply to the questioning ones of the doctor. And professional etiquette prevented the doctor from too closely questioning Doctor Rowley. But something unusual had occurred in Florida, the doctor was convinced. And he knew he was not wrong in attributing it to Alden, and through him to the influence of Marian Whittier.

In Harris Chaddock the doctor had hitherto possessed a ready channel for the dissemination of his own influence in whatever center, and he was gratified that this channel was still open. The quick return of the bread which he had cast upon the water was most assuring: the casual dropping of the hint that Alden had been associated with Marian Whittier in Palestine had been followed immediately by Ethel's suit for divorce. Alden was being isolated. "One is not so difficult to deal with when abandoned and penniless," the doctor had reflected.

That Harris had again encountered Alden, in Ted Sayor's room, the doctor was not aware. But he divined that Harris had met with some sorely disquieting experience, for the young man had again departed, and very hurriedly, for Florida. And there had been that in his countenance and demeanor that indicated intense fear, as well as consuming hatred and fixed determination. Before his departure Harris had again pressed the doctor to consent to a trial of Alden's sanity, and had shown himself stubborn and unwontedly insistent, even a bit defiant, when the doctor had again refused. Though the doctor could not say it, nevertheless he felt that the time was not propitious for such a move—if it ever should be. His plans were deep, as well as complicated; and should Harris become acquainted with them—ah, that was a contingency that must be forestalled, and quickly! Harris, like his father, had served his usefulness and was now become a worn, and therefore unreliable, cog in the huge machine.

Harris' departure for Florida was noticed by the local newspapers. Further, his destination was mentioned—and it happened to be the seaside resort where Ethel and her mother were staying. In addition, and curiously associated with this item, was a short notice to the effect that Ethel was recuperating satisfactorily from her recent sharp illness at this delightful resort. And, quite consistently, these interesting news items had been openly sent to the press from the offices of Doctor Roake.

They did not catch the eye of Fay Meuse, but interested friends eagerly brought them to her attention. She had known of Harris' two previous visits to Florida—but that was before Ethel's suit had been filed. And Fay had permitted herself then to be cajoled by Harris into acceptance of his ready assurances. But now fear, jealousy, and hot anger rose up within her. A nervous chill followed, and for several days she was confined to her room. Then her strength returned and drove her madly to the offices of Doctor Roake.

In any other circumstances the woman would have been refused an audience with the busy doctor. As it was, he really appeared to be expecting her. And her wrath abated a degree because of her surprise at her cordial reception.

And her surprise waxed great, not so much because of what the doctor said, as of what remained unsaid, but inferable. Yet when she left his presence and was escorted by an attentive messenger to the exit, she was minded to return and tell the doctor that she could recall nothing that he had uttered.

But when she arrived at her apartment she was conscious of an impression; yet, withal, so subtle, so unformed, that she could not isolate it nor say in just what manner she was being affected by it. She did know, however, that her grievance against Harris Chaddock was growing apace; she felt momentarily more grossly outraged, more deeply injured. . . Yes, she recalled now that the doctor had very clearly distinguished between her world and that of Harris Chaddock, and had left the impression that she had been but the temporary occupant of a place in Harris' life that must some day—perhaps soon—be filled by the proper tenant. It maddened her!

And her anger was increased by the supineness of Alden Cragg. "The whole mess is Cragg's fault!" she stormed, pacing back and forth through her rooms. "If he had known how to take care of a woman she'd have stayed with him! I warned him! Why doesn't he fight her divorce suit? He has all the grounds! I'd like to get hold of him. . ." And suiting her conduct to her wish, she sat down and wrote Alden a note, in care of Madam Galuth, requesting that he call on her immediately on a matter of important business.

Alden sat long over the note. He divined at once the business on which she would see him, and he shook his head. Yet as he pondered, the words of the great apostle floated through his thought: "That ye love one another." Love! Ted Sayor was dying for want of it—though it had called him and would have cast forth the devils that were wreaking his ruin, had he been willing to hear. Ethel and Harris were traveling to destruction for want of a proper sense of the divine word. And

this woman, loud in her finery, glittering with jewels, brazen in her manifestation of coarsest materialism, with her poor, fleeting concept of body painted, bleached, dyed, and bedecked for the allurement of those who ignorantly confound sex-mesmerism with love, this woman was starving for it—yet she sought only her human concept of love, and would be helped only in the way of her own choosing.

Alden knew now—it was his own bitter experience, and it is the world's—that the spoken word avails little. Mankind has been preached to for ages, yet sin remains rampant, and death still stalks abroad in all its revolting starkness. True, Jesus preached. But, as Marian had once said to the rector: "Always after he had uttered the Word he came down among the people—oh, not to shake hands with them and bid them welcome to his lip-service, but to make *practical* his preaching in solving the problems of his auditors, by healing their infirmities and raising their dead."

Yet Alden had made demonstrations before these people that should have rent the veil that blinded their eyes. Ethel surely knew that no earthly arms had brought her up from the dark valley. Ted Sayor knew that Alden had been reborn, and that the miracle had been wrought by that which Marian Whittier had once offered him, and which he had rejected for the lees that clung to the bottom of his drained cup. Harris Chaddock now knew that something had actuated Alden that could not be traced to a human source, a dominating quality, an almost superhuman manifestation of power and courage; yet he feared it, lest it separate between him and the dross he was so madly striving to obtain in Ethel. Their sole need—and the need of this woman, grasping so feverishly for such tawdry treasure—was to recognize the Christ in the way and ask for the healing touch. "Whosoever will. . ." Ah, but there must be a consuming desire for wholeness ere that healing touch can be bestowed. And it must supplant the desire for the fleshpots.

But every human circumstance is divine opportunity. Alden knew it. And he knew that to shake his head over this woman and outline the probable reception which she would accord him was sheer unfaith. And so he rose and took up the cup of cold water and went to her.

It was a luxurious apartment that Fay Meuse occupied, in a building that bore a questionable reputation. Yet because its tenants were, without exception, associated with the production of motion pictures, they and their mode of life were tolerated, even encouraged. "We must make allowances for these temperamental artists," Mrs. Dodd had urged—for she

owned the building. And Mr. Tellus was bound to admit that they spent their money freely and were "good pay". "We can't afford to be narrow," he counseled. "It isn't Christian."

The air was heavy and there were lingering traces of tobacco smoke in the darkened apartment. The rich furnishings were in wild disorder. "They piled in here from the studio at two this morning and insisted on dancing," the woman explained, as she kicked the corner of a beautiful oriental rug into place. She tossed aside the cushions on a rarely tapestried davenport and sank upon it. "Bring me that smoking-stand," she said, motioning toward the article; "and come and sit by me."

Alden complied and seated himself beside her. She lighted a cigarette and inhaled deeply several times, then turned to him. "Your wife is taking Harris Chaddock away from me," she said. "I want you to stop it. Why, certainly Harry expected to marry me," as Alden bent a quizzical look upon her. "I'm getting my trousseau ready now. Oh, I ain't squeamish. I know Harry's been pretty gay—but I'm no saint myself. Besides, I'm marrying for a home. I've had the love business; now I'm arranging for three squares a day and steam-heat. And I don't intend your wife or any other hussy shall upset my little plans. So it's up to you to get busy."

Alden looked into the woman's jaded eyes, and a great compassion surged up within him. "I would like to help you," he said in a low, gentle voice. "But I do not think it can be in the way you wish."

Her brows drew sharply together. "Why, my God, man! all I ask of you is to fight your wife's divorce suit!" she cried. "You haven't lifted a finger!"

"Harris and Ethel are groping in the dark. I have tried to help them, but they are not ready . . . yet."

"But you ain't going to let 'em make a monkey of you, are you?"

"I shall not oppose their marriage."

"But . . . listen: don't you see you've got everything on your side? She ain't got a leg to stand on!"

"I see no reason for trying to prevent her from separating from me," he answered.

"Well, you sure *are* crazy!"

"No. I have merely come to my senses—as you will have to."

"Oh," with a curl of the lip, "got over loving your wife, eh? Course, that's different. Got another? I've heard Harris say . . ."

"I love my wife deeply."

She sat back and stared at him, puzzled. Then she leaned forward. "And you let another man steal her?"

"That is their problem—now."

"Eh? *Their* problem?" She burst into a mocking laugh. "Oh, my God!" she cried. "A fellow does you all kinds of dirt, then takes your wife away right under your eyes, with all Penberry's money, and you sit by and suck your thumb and say it's *their* problem! My God! Why . . . why, if I was a man, and a fellow did to me what Harris has done to you, I'd fill him so full of lead they'd have to get a derrick to lift him! *Their* problem! Oh, I didn't care until she started her divorce suit. Then I knew she was after Harry—and he, the poor fool, has fallen for Penberry's coin! . . ."

"Then you do not love Harris?"

"Love him!" She threw back her head and laughed. "Why, you poor fool, it's because I love him that I want to get him away from your wife!"

He looked into her painted face and shook his head. "You do not know what love is," he murmured.

"Well," she retorted, "in this case it's board and lodging. Let me tell you, my mirror ain't no liar, and I know that some day they'll be saying at the studio that little Eva's a has-been, and then it's me for the dump. That's what's staring me in the face and making me love Harry so passionately. You talk about *their* problem, but I tell you this is *my* problem!"

"Your problem," he said gently, "is yourself."

"Oh," she gave back, bristling, "I suppose *I'm* the one to blame! The fault's all *mine!* Your wife's a saint, and Harris . . . My God! has every cell in your brain gone dry? Don't you know yet what they've done to you? *Their* problem! . . . It really is *yours!* But you can't solve it, or won't, and you won't help me to, so . . ."

She sprang up and went quickly to a rare old spinnet desk. From a drawer she extracted a glittering pistol and returned with it to the davenport. "This will solve it for 'em, I guess!"

He glanced at the pistol, then away. "You are mistaken," he said. "That is the way the world tries to solve its problems. That is why it fails. And you will fail if you try it that way."

"And you want me to try *your* way, eh? I'm to sit down and say: 'Tut, tut!' and let 'em make a cuckoo of me, as they have of you, eh? Humph! I see now why a real man like Harry Chaddock can use you for a doormat! God! when I see you I really love him! I made a mistake sending for you—I might as well have asked that little poppinjay evangelist in the tent on the back lot to help me! He's a dishrag, too! Always blubbering about loving Jesus! I can hear him nights praying! God!—he sickens me! But I think he'd do you good! You'd better go over and hear him!"

"I have heard him."

"Humph! I thought so! He's converted you to Christianity!"

"He does not know what Christianity is."

She turned and stared at him incredulously. "Well, I . . . want . . . to . . . know!" she murmured. Then the look of contempt returned to her face, and her shoulders went up. "You'd better be going now," she said, rising and dropping the pistol into a pocket of her dress. "I'm sorry I sent for you. But I thought you might help me."

He rose and stood before her. "Nothing that I might say would help you," he answered. "And I cannot do what you ask."

"No; your spine's mush! You're a coward! You're afraid of Harris Chaddock!"

"What you are trying to get is not what you really need, but I could not convince you of it. I am sorry for you. . ."

"Oh," she broke in with infinite scorn, "you needn't slobber any sentiment on me! You've said it was their problem; you said they were groping in the dark. Well, I'll solve the problem for them." She drew nearer and glowered into his face. "You said you loved your wife. You lied. For if you loved her you'd save her. Harris Chaddock isn't going to marry her—oh, no! I'll attend to that! . . ."

His arms went out and he gripped her by the shoulders. At the same instant a sound came from the vestibule, as of a door opening. Alden heard the woman gasp. He loosed his grasp and turned. In the doorway stood Harris Chaddock.

"Well, well!" Harris stepped into the room. "It's the little soldier-boy again! I can't lose him!"

"Harry!" The woman started toward him with outstretched arms. "I'm so glad you've come! Put this fellow out! He . . ."

Harris turned upon her with withering scorn. "Don't try to put that over on me!" he cried. "He didn't come here without an invitation! I know him too well for that! And I know why he's here!"

"Harry!"

He laughed in her face. "Omit the theatricals, my dear," he mocked. "I understand fully. And, as I'm *de trop*, I'll be going."

The woman gave a cry and threw herself upon him. "Harry, don't leave me! For God's sake, don't go! Let me tell you. . ."

He threw her from him and stepped back. "You've got this preacher; I found you in his arms; you don't want me! . . ."

"You don't mean that, Harris," said Alden coldly. "If you

are able to voice the truth, do so now. You are glad to find me here, for you have been with Ethel in Florida. You have come here now to break with this woman."

Harris laughed coarsely. "I *am* glad to find you here, Cragg," he answered with a sneer. "Ethel's case needed a little strengthening. This will do the business. For once I am grateful to you."

"Harry!" The woman was becoming hysterical. "You don't mean it! Don't say that! For God's sake, don't go! . . . *don't.* . .!"

He had turned again and was at the door. There he halted and faced about. "I'll be honest with you, Fay," he said meanly, "since I've found you in Cragg's arms. I came here to call it off. I was beginning to get tired of you . . . and it couldn't last anyway. Besides, since I see that you love this dog, I'll tell you that you're getting old and fat." He laughed again, a low, taunting laugh. "You wheeze now, and your face is beginning to look like a cornfield. But for your sake I'm glad you've got hold of this tow-headed preacher. He's a little empty in the attic, but otherwise sound. To be sure, he's got another one in Jerusalem. . ."

At that instant the now crazed woman whipped the pistol from her pocket. Harris dashed to one side and fell up against the wall. Alden saw the woman's movement and divined her intent, but he was too far from her to seize her arm. The pistol came up. Alden sprang forward, covered the cowering Harris with his own body, and stood facing the desperate woman.

"Get away from him!" she shrilled. "Get away . . . Damn you! Get away, or I'll drop you too! . . ."

Behind Alden huddled the shrinking form of Harris Chaddock. Before him swayed the outraged woman, blind with passion. Her face was livid; the veins stood out from her forehead; her throat was swollen until she choked as her heaving breast forced the hot breath through it.

"Stand aside!" she screamed.

Still Alden stood, facing the pistol to protect the man who would have slain him with his own hate. . .

Then she fired, point-blank. The bullet went wide. Again the pistol spat forth its missile of death. Again, and still again, in quick succession. A spot of red appeared on Alden's left arm. The sulphurous fumes filled the apartment. In the haze of smoke their forms disappeared. . .

And then, while the woman lay, face down, on the davenport, sobbing wildly, Alden went to the door and opened it. Harris crept after him, gasping and choking, and rushed out.

Alden followed, staggering slightly. And while some of the tenants, attracted by the muffled reports, peered curiously from their windows, or peeped out into the corridors, Alden Cragg moved slowly down the street, while the man for whom he had offered his own human sense of life sprang wildly into his car and dashed madly away.

CHAPTER 24

THAT the world has from time immemorial stood in awe of the doctor and the priest has resulted from mortal fear of death and the imagined terrors of the hereafter, as well as from the ignorant belief that these specially educated classes—though instructed in the densest materialism, which is of itself death—were in possession of faculties for peering into the unknown and ordinarily inscrutable and interpreting what they pretended to see there to the untutored and gaping populace. In proportion to the vulgar belief in the superiority of the physician and preacher have these been enabled to create an autocracy in human thought that has quenched spirituality. And thereby has death been kept regnant. Small wonder that, coming in the guise of greatest good, the mortal systems of *materia medica* and scholastic theology should have obtained from awed and terrorized parents what they must needs obtain to perpetuate themselves: control of the children. With this, and working through parenthood, particularly organized motherhood, did Doctor Roake seek to complete his towering system.

The result was quickly apparent. Public schools were ceasing to be public as they passed under the domination of the Roake plan. As the doctor dictated, so did the school doors open, so did they close, so did the children submit their naked little bodies to tapping and sounding, to scrutiny and probing, to culture-taking, serumizing, and vaccination, to isolation and quarantine, and—far worse—did they yield their receptive mentalities to the injection of the devastating germs of fear. The spectacle-maker could not but rub his palms together in joyful prospect of his harvest, when hosts of goggle-eyed little ones should stream from his office and begin their wary peering about the streets. The antitoxin-maker must glow with pleasing anticipation. Nor could the undertaker remain unmoved by the outlook.

Doctor Benson—and he was not alone in his horrified protest—gasped as he saw the octopus tentacles of the Roake plan

gliding through churches and schools into homes and nurseries. . .

"Why, statistics show," he cried, "that the healthiest age of childhood is the school age! It is during those years that they are most immune to disease—if left alone! But now to direct their thoughts to the constant contemplation of their bodies, to fill their minds with ideas of disease, to scare them —and their parents through them—into sending for these very political doctors—these medical interlopers—on the slightest provocation, I say, by heaven! it's crime of the most flagrant sort! Commercialism is back of it, nothing else! What in God's name is to become of us?"

So distressed was Doctor Benson that he insisted on visiting certain of the public schools during a time of medical inspection. And so outraged did he become in behalf of the children that he rushed to the office of Doctor Sale and burst into an uproar of protestation. "Why, my God, man, I saw that despoiler of homes, Harris Chaddock, use a tongue depressor in the mouth of a healthy child that he had just taken from the mouth of one having syphilitic sore throat! He didn't stop to wash it! He didn't even wipe it on a rag! When I protested, he asked me what authority I had! Where in heaven's name is the personal inviolability provision of our Constitution?"

Doctor Sale smiled. "If it isn't there, then Roake has removed it," he replied.

"And are we decent doctors going to stand for it?" Doctor Benson demanded. "If ignorant, mesmerized fathers and mothers relinquish the physical care of their children to such vultures as Roake and his political gang, are we going to stand aside and permit these helpless little ones to be serumized and vaccinated, antitoxined, inoculated, stripped and disinfected and pasteurized and gloated over by lusting buzzards like Harris Chaddock? I say, are we going to let the babes be carved, mutilated, emasculated, blinded, deafened, operated on for imaginary defects, their tonsils torn out, their noses ripped open, parts of their brains cut away to cure so-called hereditary evils? . . . evils that I vow are mental in origin!"

Sale shrugged his shoulders. "What can we do?" he asked listlessly. "The Wess law prepared the way for any sort of medical legislation Roake wanted to have enacted. Now he has his school inspection law, his act to safeguard the soldiers, and a dozen others, all of which he can enforce, for he can call upon the police and, if necessary, the state militia. He can enter any home in the state; can force any one, male or female, to submit to examination; and can demand, under

penalty of the penitentiary, that they take his medicines and submit to his serumizing, vaccinating, carving and what-not. What are you going to do about it? After all, the people have brought this upon themselves. They've been asleep!"

"But—there are thousands of decent doctors opposed to him!"

"Oh, doubtless. But he's got them estopped. You see, he's a canny rascal: he took advantage of the awful stress under which the world has been laboring during this war."

"By heaven! he *is* canny," Benson agreed vehemently. "And he's hypocritical, for everything is done with the appearance of being for the good of the people. Oh, I know! He impresses mothers with his desire to coöperate with them to secure the welfare of their children, and they—well, they greedily gobble up everything he tells them and sell him their very souls! Now he's got the nurses organized and scared stiff. I am told that if a nurse criticizes anything a doctor of this organization does, why, she's kicked out. And, the worst of it is, she finds it impossible to secure employment again as a public nurse. The term 'nurse' is rapidly becoming a synonym of 'slave'. For unless a nurse will submit to the absolute dictation of a political doctor and protect him in his acts, she might as well give up. As for the poor children, the hungry gang of political doctors has been loosed among them, headed by Harris Chaddock. The present generation is bad enough, but the coming one, molded like putty by these medical politicians . . . well, I'll leave it to your imagination! But let me tell you, Sale, the time is coming when, unless we prostrate ourselves before the political doctors, we'll face the prison! And this in the boasted 'land of the free'!"

Sale again shrugged his shoulders. Doctor Benson waited in silence for a moment, then he drew a document from a pocket. "Do you know what gives Roake his power?" he demanded. "This revision of the medical practice act which he has secured: 'Failure to provide necessary medical treatment for a child shall, in case the child dies, be regarded as manslaughter or murder'. Do you get that? Who determines what the *necessary medical treatment* shall be? Roake!"

Thus, through the specious plea of child-protection, child-study and culture, was every parent's door opened to the serpent. Yet the wise Nazarene, teacher preëminent, had recognized in these little ones themselves the teachers of the race. For in them is the Christ-idea to be seen. Little wonder, then, that the "one lie" seeks to dominate them! To mislead them with the illusions of sense-testimony, and to pervert the inherent purity of their thought with the lethal dross of material education!

In direct antithesis to the ceaseless activities of the Galilean teacher Harris Chaddock continued to pursue his daily round in the guise of public benefactor. And in his wake lay naught but human wreckage. Opposition only stirred him to madder efforts. Yet whenever his thought reverted to the wild scene enacted in the apartment of Fay Meuse, a cold sweat would pour out over him and fearful anticipations would cause his heart to flutter. If Alden had escaped death from the flying bullets—and he knew that he had, for he had seen him again in Madam Galuth's car—his escape was of itself a miracle. And Harris' impression of the supernaturalness of this new Alden Cragg was profoundly deepened. He owed his life to Alden's heroism, he knew. And yet the knowledge sickened him.

He realized that he had played the fool; but knowledge of that fact did not lessen his apprehension of the grave danger that now menaced him in the person of Fay Meuse. As he thought on this he quaked.

But he could not demand her arrest for attempted murder, for he dared not risk the publicity that this, or an order binding her over to keep the peace, would afford. And yet while she lived and had her freedom she constituted a Damoclean sword that might fall momentarily, that would fall certainly if he married Ethel.

Constantly dwelling on his peril, while his bitter hatred of Alden Cragg hourly more deeply corroded his shriveled soul, Harris became nervous, irritable, shrinking. He skulked when afoot; and when he drove he did so only in a closed car. His appearance and demeanor attracted the attention of Doctor Roake—and the latter quickly divined the cause, but did not offer a palliative. At length came word from Ethel anent the progress of her divorce suit that made Harris desperate, and he forthwith determined upon protective measures that the enactment of certain of Doctor Roake's medical bills had suggested.

Thus it was that shortly thereafter the apartment of Fay Meuse was forcibly entered by deputies of Harris, accompanied by police officers, and the startled, shrinking woman questioned regarding her work at the studio, her associates, the conduct of her life, and other matters of a personal nature. Certain charges were made—America was at war, and the "Act to safeguard soldiers" must be rigidly enforced. This woman's conduct was admittedly irregular, and the law, a Roake extension of the "Rooming-house act", demanded that she appear at the office of the health executive for examination. The other tenants of the building were served with a like summons.

And they one and all submitted, with what grace they could command.

On her return home from the office of the health executive, Fay Meuse disposed herself to reflect. She had been further questioned there, and, as a matter of public protection, had submitted to the extraction of a small quantity of blood from her arm for examination. Then she had been dismissed, with an order to reappear the following day to learn if treatment were necessary.

As she reflected, her fears rose. A dread apprehension came upon her. It assumed the proportions of a premonition. She knew she was helpless, that the law could enforce her appearance at the health executive's office the next day . . . and the health executive was Harris Chaddock! And while the other tenants of the building laughed and bantered one another over the incident, she sat with her thoughts weighing upon her with crushing force. None knew, but the three concerned, of her mad attempt on Harris' life. She shuddered as she thought of it. She had disposed pictures and hangings over the shattered wall where the bullets had torn great holes in the plastering. She had lied, smilingly, to those questioning ones who had heard the pistol reports, and those who had seen the two men hurry away. And she cursed herself now that she had failed in her purpose. . . Yet she thanked God that Cragg had been spared.

And when she thought of Alden Cragg a feeling of awe came upon her. With it came wonder and a great admiration for the man whom she had so mistakenly called a coward. He had come on her summons to help her; but she had insanely tried to kill him! What had caused it? And why now in her misery did she turn again to him?

She rose and called him by telephone. She dared not commit herself, but asked only that he come again to see her. He refused, and the sadness in his voice smote her so that she burst into tears as she listened. She begged that he would meet her in the street; and she turned from the telephone hysterical when he told her that he would. . .

Then, when she saw him, she pled for forgiveness for her mad deed, vainly trying to stifle her sobs, for the streets were thronged. She begged to know if he had been touched; she wept over the slight flesh wound in his arm; she told him of her summons to the office of Harris Chaddock that day, and of the demand that she return to-morrow. . . His face was very grave as he listened, and when she concluded he said only: "Take Doctor Benson with you to-morrow. I will see him meantime and prepare him."

He did not know, nor did she, that Harris Chaddock had passed them as they stood talking, else might he have connected the incident with the raid that was made late that night upon his own little apartment over Madam Galuth's garage, a raid made with a flourish of revolvers, with abusive language and unwarranted violence.

"I have no disease," was Alden's ineffectual protest.

"You'll have one before I get through with you," Harris muttered low in reply, "and die a rotting death!"

Again, it was under the sanction of the law, the Roake extension of the "Rooming-house act", that the raid was made. And it was for "the safeguarding of the American soldiers." For he, Alden Cragg, was informed that he had but recently returned from Jerusalem, a foul pest-hole. And it was known that he had associated with certain of the motion picture tenants of the apartment building owned by Mrs. Dodd. He must submit, therefore, to a blood test, for he was become a "suspect".

He refused, on his constitutional rights, and was given the alternative of commitment to jail. He unhesitatingly chose the latter. And dawn found him in a cell.

That same morning Fay Meuse responded to her summons to the office of the district health executive. Doctor Benson, grim and determined, accompanied her. She was handed a report on the test of the blood taken from her arm the day before. The word "positive" struck her like a blow from a club. "It's a lie!" she cried. "Where's Harris Chaddock? Tell him I want to see him!"

But she was informed that the chief was not visible. Also that the prescribed treatment must begin immediately—the law required it.

Her loud protest brought Doctor Benson to her side. He had been waiting in the outer reception room. "I am this woman's physician," he asserted stoutly. "I demand to know what you are about to inject into her veins!" He was but following the instructions of Alden Cragg. "I demand for her a sample of the fluid in that needle! How do we know that it is not deleterious?"

The young doctor in charge doubtless would have complied with the drastic request, but for the interference of Harris Chaddock himself. The latter hurried into the room, seized the needle from his assistant's hand, and dashed it in pieces to the floor.

Doctor Benson stepped back. His eyes flashed. "My patient refuses to submit to the injection of anything into her blood!" he declared. "We will appeal to the protection of the Constitution of the United States!"

Harris' face was white. His hands shook. It was as if he had but narrowly escaped a great peril. He held himself shielded by the body of the young assistant. "She'll be locked up until she does!" he answered in fluttering tones. "The law's going to be obeyed!" . . .

Later that afternoon Doctor Benson paced back and forth in his shabby little office with shoulders bent and muscles twitching convulsively. He had not committed his thoughts to Fay Meuse—he had not dared! He had openly defied the health authorities; he had boldly sent the woman back to her apartment and bidden her escape from the city at once. He knew that thereby he had ruined himself. And he had just learned by telephoning to Madam Galuth that Alden Cragg had been taken away during the night by the health authorities operating in the name of the public weal.

CHAPTER 25

THE despotic invasion of personal liberty that had resulted in the incarceration of Alden Cragg held Doctor Benson for some hours dumfounded. Had this occurred elsewhere, in the European centers of darkened minds, he had not been greatly moved, but here, in the land of Washington, of Lincoln, it was incredible! And there was more in it than the robbing of a man of his freedom: there was the sinister announcement that the strength of the Roake religio-medical organization was now such that it could risk in confidence a supreme test of its powers.

Where now was Alden's confident statement that evil could be made to destroy itself? "He said," the doctor murmured, as he sat deep in his study of the case, "that evil could be made to commit suicide. Humph! Said he was not persecuting any man. . . And this is what he gets for turning the other cheek!"

What the good doctor did not know was that the evil that had befallen Alden Cragg had not been unanticipated, either by Alden or Madam Galuth. For Alden had awaited the blow, and he had suffered imprisonment voluntarily. He knew that he was literally offering himself a living sacrifice. He smiled as he reflected that this had become his wont.

"If Roake puts this thing over," Doctor Benson mused gloomily, "he's *got* us! It will mean the domination of every man, woman, and child in this country, a hundred million people!" Then his thought turned upon the technical aspects

of the case. "This rot about 'carriers'. . . Why, every medical man knows that 'carriers' are produced by the physicians themselves by giving immunizing doses of antitoxin and other serums. The doctors say that twenty-five per cent of the people are diphtheria 'carriers'. Humph! That would mean that more than twenty-seven million people in this country could be arrested and jailed for distributing diphtheria! Lord, if it were true that 'carriers' are dangerous, the whole country would be depopulated by diphtheria alone! Rot, damnable rot! Calculated to scare old wives! God help us! . . . As for the charge against Fay Meuse, the identical one could be brought against Harris Chaddock. But he's protected. Humph! A mere acid condition of the woman's blood could give a 'positive' test, and she might be as innocent as a babe. . . But she's out of it now. The question now is: What are they going to do to Cragg? And what will happen to me?"

And, later that day, standing before Madam Galuth in her little parlor: "I'm done for, Madam. . ."

"Oh, no, you are not," she gently contradicted. "I think your work is just beginning. That is why I telephoned you to come here to-day. But now we must act quickly. Go with your lawyer to the County Court and secure Alden's release on a writ of *habeas corpus*."

"It will only be temporary. . ."

"Probably so. The case will doubtless go further. But this is the first step."

Of the far-reaching events now forward, not a handful in Crestelridge knew. Following the Primal Motors coup, society had sped panting back to its wonted resorts, and not until the press sent forth the interesting information that the Reverend Wilson Whittier and family were returning home with their daughter Ethel, now quite recovered from her recent alarming illness, and to whom the Courts had but just granted separation from Alden Cragg, did the Telluses, Blacks, and Kerls evince more than a passing interest in Crestelridge happenings.

"That shows where the rector stands in matters of church doctrine," Mrs. Kerl commented cynically. "The Church effects an indissoluble bond, you know."

"Oh, no," laughed Mrs. Black, "it merely shows that Mama Whittier's deft hand is still directing their family destinies. I understand that Ethel resumes her maiden name. Will be known as Miss Ethel Whittier. She's lucky. Alden has become a disgrace. Lost his self-respect, everything, his name included. Is in the hands of the Galuth. . ."

The rector had returned to Crestelridge on the first day of August. He was eager to get back—yet sorely afraid. He

wanted to be there before his aristocratic parishioners should return from their summer's play. He wanted to plunge again into his institutional work and forget. He was tired, very tired. His soul dripped bitter gall. He knew himself now but the plaything of Fate. He felt more keenly than ever now the rising barrier between himself and his family. And he had not the strength nor the courage to break it down. He crept into Crestelridge with furtive look and drooping shoulders, as if fearful that from a doorway, an alley, someone would suddenly shout abroad his dreadful disgrace.

His wife and daughter came with their customary sangfroid. Ethel fairly bloomed as she threw herself into Harris Chaddock's arms at the station with a cry of joy. Mrs. Whittier held her head high and at times tossed it as if in defiance of an imaginary opponent.

"The *Courier* announced that you would arrive to-day," Harris remarked. "I didn't intend it should, but Doctor Roake revels in publicity, you know, and when you wired him the date of your arrival he sent the news right to the papers."

"I'm glad of it," chirped Ethel, squeezing his hand. "I want to be in the public's eye. A little notoriety makes one interesting."

The rector threw her a pained look, though he made no comment. But arrived at the rectory, he drew Harris into the study. "Alden?" he asked, almost eagerly.

Harris laughed. "In jail. That is, he was."

"Jail!" the rector gasped.

"Associating with street-walkers," Harris explained. And he cited the grounds on which Alden had been incarcerated, adding: "He was released on a writ of *habeas corpus*. His trial comes up before the Superior Court next week."

The rector paled. His trial! What might not come out in that! Alas! he had come back to Crestelridge only to suffer additional misery at the hands of Alden Cragg! . . .

He must see Alden at once! Alden must come to the rectory!—No, he would meet him in the rector's office in the parish house! And to think that in order to reach the mesmerized youth he must communicate with the Galuth! . . .

"Well," Harris observed, throwing himself into a chair and lighting a cigar, "what do you think of the way your scheme has developed?"

The rector turned in surprise. "My scheme?"

"The Roake organization. You and the doctor built better than you knew, don't you think so now? It's becoming nation-wide; it's going to be international. It's beginning to try its wings in earnest. Remember old Doc Benson? We're having

his medical license revoked. Too much interference with our office. We've got the bread-and-butter clinch on him. And on any others who try to stop us. Do you know what's coming? The organization is going to adopt a name, first. Probably we'll call it the United States Religio-Medical Alliance to start with. Later, when it becomes broader in its scope, we'll call it the International. . . But first on the program we intend to bring about the creating of a National Department of Health, with the head of the organization a member of the President's Cabinet—that means Roake to start with; possibly Yours Truly later, eh? And let me tell you, that Cabinet member is the one who will always become President. See? We've got that office cinched. Oh, it will take a little time, a few years perhaps. But it's coming fast. I feel—and I know Roake does—that to-day we have reached a commanding position, a position from which we can absolutely dictate. Let me tell you what we did at Mrs. Dodd's apartment house. . ."

The rector stood aghast at the coolness, the easy confidence, of the speaker, this man who had brought the black clouds of disgrace lowering over their heads, who had sent Ethel to the brink of the grave and left an ineffaceable stain upon her soul, who now was calmly planning an early marriage with Ethel, yet who, the rector knew, would on the slightest provocation abandon her as heartlessly as he would send Alden Cragg to imprisonment, to death, for the gratification of his own lusts.

Yet he must remember that Harris Chaddock was a communicant, in excellent standing, of St. Jude's, and that he had the unqualified support of such powerful members as the Telluses, Blacks, and Kerls. . . He turned away without replying and passed into the parish house to instruct his assistant to summon Alden Cragg at once.

The hot summer sun was still high when Alden betook himself that afternoon to the parish house on the rector's summons. He had declined Madam Galuth's proffer of her car, preferring to walk. And as he went he constantly proclaimed his immunity from personal control. His stay in the jail had been of short duration. And it had afforded him an opportunity. He looked forward in confidence to his trial. "It is the trial of my faith," he reflected. "And that, as Peter said, is more precious than of gold that perisheth."

As he approached St. Jude's he saw Harris Chaddock's limousine draw up and Ethel and Harris descend and enter the parish house. He paused in the shade of a tree until they disappeared. He knew they had not seen him. And he vaguely wondered why, instead of entering the rectory, they had chosen to go into the parish house.

The great doors of St. Jude's stood open, and he entered. A grateful coolness welcomed him from the twilight within. The auditorium was without occupant. He passed noiselessly down the center aisle and dropped into what had formerly been the Cragg pew. There he bent his head and silently thanked God for the rich blessing of knowledge of Him that had come to him through Marian Whittier.

He was early for his appointment, a full half hour. But he was glad now. Like a benediction a sense of drowsiness stole over him, and he sat long, with bowed head and eyes closed. . .

He awoke with a start and sprang up. Apprehensive lest he had kept the rector waiting, he moved rapidly down the aisle toward the door leading into the parish house. At the enclosed stairway to the organ loft he almost collided with Harris Chaddock and Ethel.

"You! Again!" exclaimed Harris, flaming with anger. "Good God! are you always dogging me? Have you been spying on us?" He seized Alden's collar, jerked him forward, and raised an arm to deal a blow.

At the same instant came a blinding flash, almost in Alden's eyes, a loud report, a wild scream from Ethel, and the thud of Harris' body as it crashed upon the floor.

Alden stood bewildered. Scream after scream came from Ethel. He turned and stood staring dumbly at the body on the floor. Then he bent over it.

Harris lay motionless, blood streaming from a gaping tear in his chest. Ethel lay across him, hysterical. On the floor beside Harris lay a pistol. Alden's heart stopped: he had seen that weapon but a few days before in the hands of Fay Meuse!

Through the wide-flung doors of the parish house people came running, attracted by Ethel's piercing screams. The rector was brought. Mrs. Whittier and the servants rushed in. Ellory Sten flew to the telephone and wildly called the police. Harris was lifted and laid upon a cushioned bench. Doctor Roake was madly summoned. . .

Slowly, very slowly, consciousness returned, for a fleeting moment, and Harris opened his eyes. His fading gaze fell upon Alden. Hatred glowed in his glazing orbs. His mouth moved. "He . . . did . . . it . . . Cragg," he whispered. "He told . . . me . . . I should never . . . marry . . . Ethel. . ." The breath fluttered from his bloodless lips. His muscles twitched. He gasped. Then death's icy fingers closed about his quivering heart.

THOU ISRAEL

BOOK 4

OUR eyes are holden that we cannot see things that stare us in the face until the hour arrives when the mind is ripened. Then we behold them, and the time when we saw them not is like a dream.

—*Emerson.*

THOU ISRAEL

CHAPTER 1

ALDEN CRAGG had returned to his own; but they had set him at nought and marked him for slaughter. Yet it was no light matter that he had demanded of his kinsmen, for he had required what had been required of Israel throughout the ages, that they abandon the gods which they had made for themselves while wandering through the wilderness of human belief.

It was but a repetition of the old, old story. The Nazarene had, long since, come to his own, with amazing proofs of the awful fact that they were worshiping the forces of destruction; yet they slew him as a malefactor.

So the ancient prophets had repeatedly come to the people of Israel, with thunderous rebukes of the evil that had mesmerized them; yet Israel baited the prophets and flouted them forth with raucous mockery.

It is but human history. But human history—amazing fact!—is the story of Israel.

Over the sodden fields of France that summer of 1918 the German nation drove madly on its nightmare journey to destruction. A hundred years prior to the advent of the Nazarene prophet "lost" Israel had accepted the "good old German god" in the person of the magic-working Odin. It was evil's subtle master-stroke, and dire was the penalty which Israel paid. Yet twenty centuries later, when Britain and America stood braced against the Berserk onslaughts of the Kaiser's minions, it was still Israel that fought back the mesmerized followers of the "good old German god"—it was *Israel redivivus*, awakened by the clanging fall of the leaden hammer.

From March until May the wearied British had been beaten steadily back. Ephraim's morale wavered. The German saw it, and wheeled exulting upon the panting French. A world looked on and gasped. . .

Then Manasseh rushed upon the gory field and swept

through Belleau Wood. And Manasseh's huge shadow struck chill terror to the amazed Assyrian.

Yet the enemy sprang back from the recoil, and July saw the launching of the fifth German offensive. It was met by Château-Thierry. It was crushed on August 8th, the black day of the German army in the Great War. It was the amazing showing of the American troops that enabled the Allies to take a successful offensive before Amiens. It was the tardy waking of the allied nations to the inevitableness of victory; it was their refusal to be further deceived by the propaganda of defeat to which they had listened with bated breath for four terror-haunted years. It was German fear of America's troops that shattered German morale: it was the enemy's belief that he was beaten that paralyzed his arm and led, in the seven weeks following August 8th, to a series of defeats unparalleled in the history of German warfare. The ancient prophecy that Israel should never suffer defeat by Gentile nation still stood.

Again the leaden hammer crashed down. Constantinople passed into Israel's hands. To this great fortified city, some sixteen centuries earlier, the military center of the Roman Empire had been hurriedly shifted to meet the peril from the House of Joseph, that portion of Israel then known as "the People of Guta," the Goths. Its fall now completed another vast cycle of human history, a cycle begun six centuries before Christ, when Josiah, King of Judah, lost both life and kingdom on the fateful plain of Armageddon.

The very circumstance of delivering the oracles of God to Israel was tantamount to a prophecy that from the beginnings of history this people, thus "chosen", must, even against their will, enact a mighty rôle. It was prophesied that the warfare of error to destroy the Word would extend over millenniums of human history; yet it was also foretold that the supreme command on either side should not change hands. It was prophesied that in these last days Israel and the Assyrian should again come face to face over the age-old issues. The leader assigned to Israel was that militant archangel on whose feast the last stunning blow of the Great War of 1914-18 was struck. And the adversary was declared to be the "Prince of this World".

Yet not all who served beneath the banners of the adversary were of the Gentiles. Some there were, Israel's kin, who recognized their status as slaves of the Assyrian and refused to fight against their own. A regiment of German soldiers from Saxony raised a flag of truce above their trenches opposite the British and signalled: "We are brothers. We shall not fight you." And when they were removed by the Kaiser's order,

they warned the British that it was a Prussian regiment that was being sent to take their place. Sons of Isaac were these, who had refused to join the revolt of Korah.

With the Argonne-Meuse offensive the last chapter of this cycle of the Great Combat was recorded. On the night of September 11th the American units chosen to destroy the St. Mihiel salient moved silently into their front-line trenches. It was a brooding night, with ominous, low-hung clouds. The ground was an ooze. The trenches were sumps. At midnight the awesome quiet burst into an inferno. At five in the morning the troops were ordered over.

In the dim light of No Man's Land a mud-covered private accosted another. "Beg pardon, sir, but could you be from Crestelridge?" It was as if they were meeting on a city street.

"Yes! Who are you?"

"I was valet to Mr. Ted Sayor, sir. . ."

"What! You are Boots?"

"Yes, sir. And you are the assistant rector of St. Jude's."

George Earl seized the former valet's hand. Bullets were flying thick. "We'd best lie down," he counseled.

"But I'm not so scared, sir, when I keep moving," came the answer.

The barrage lifted and the troops rolled forward. The enemy first line was passed. The scattered resistance from the second line was quickly damped. The top of the hill was gained and the descent of the opposite side begun.

"I'd have thought, sir, that you would come as a chaplain," commented the ex-valet, drawing closer to the former clergyman. "If you had, sir, I'd a liked to ask you some questions. I . . . I'm a bit afraid to die, sir."

The other caught his breath. "I couldn't preach falsehoods to the boys about to die. I couldn't deceive them with speculations about things of which I know no more than they. I could only come as one of them. I want to face the future as bravely as they, with a mind unencumbered by theological subtleties and crumbling creeds. It is nobler . . . manlier. . ." He choked with the fullness of his soul.

"Strange, sir, what it's all about," continued his companion. "I do not want to kill anybody. I really don't understand. I . . . Who'd a thought it, sir!"

Yet George Earl had thought it, had seen it coming, and had shuddered for the result. "It is because of men's wickedness," he answered.

"But, sir, will the war make us better?"

"God knows!"

"Strange, sir, but I thought these Germans were Christians!"

"Christians! Heaven help us, there are no *Christians* on the earth! If men knew what Christianity was do you suppose we would be slaughtering our fellows here to-day?"

The slope was gradual and at the bottom lay a dense wood. In the edge of the wood the enemy had planted his machine guns. The tall trees were thick with nests of snipers. The oncoming troops threw themselves flat. When for a moment the bullets ceased whistling, they sprang up, plunged forward, and fell prone again. This drew the enemy's fire upon them, but enabled other sections to rise in the interim and move ahead. Thus was the wood won, slowly, under exquisite torture. The hillside presented a grewsome sight. The dead lay thick. The wounded rolled in agony; some tried to crawl away; others strove to hobble on mangled limbs. Stretcher-bearers sped back and forth, and first-aid men scorned death to bestow their ministrations. The caste of wealth, of intellect, of race, consumed in the flames. Patrician and pleb met in a common brotherhood. . .

"God, what a world, if men in street and mart,
Felt that same kinship of the human heart,
Which makes them, in the face of fire and flood,
Rise to the meaning of True Brotherhood. . ."

George Earl murmured these lines, then started forward again. But a sharp cry escaped him. He halted, clasped his hands to his bosom and stood wavering. Then, as the arms of his companion closed around him, he sank limp. And the line moved on. . .

Over the young clergyman's grave that night the former valet hung, wondering. A smile had rested on the bloodless lips of the dead man when they placed his body in the muddy ground. "What does he see?" Boots kept wondering. "What does he see?" Absorbed in their talk, he and Earl had walked into a machine gun nest; and Boots had exhibited such courage in the rescue of his companion's body that his conduct had been widely lauded. But it was not of this that the valet thought as he remembered that dead face with its quixotic smile. The question that he kept repeating, though couched in other words, was the query of the ages: "If a man die shall he live again?"

And while the hosts of Israel's adversary were falling back with the grip of fear at their hearts; while the simple-minded valet was pondering his rending question; and while Alden Cragg in his darkened cell was wrestling in the same combat that transformed Jacob into Israel, a tall, elderly man, with eyes snapping beneath whitened brows, sat confronting a slender girl of rare beauty on a housetop in the squalid town of

Khanikan, on the Diala, in modern Persia. At the girl's feet sat a Jew, clad in the British uniform. On the low parapet that rose above the cornice reclined an Egyptian woman. The oddly assembled quartette had come from Port Said by way of the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf. And a British gunboat had brought them.

"The most important investigation of our time, I admit, provided we get results," the old man was saying vigorously; "but what have we discovered so far that is of real value? Br-r-r-r! Months of hardship and danger. . . And as for any proofs that the Bible promises have been fulfilled . . . Why, look you, we are really proving that the Bible is a hodge-podge of wild romancings! It is true, we British are the preservers of the Bible. But what good does it do to preserve a book that we don't understand?"

The girl reached up and took his hand. "We have learned much of real value these past months," she replied gently, "oh, so much! Oh, yes, I know you found Mesopotamia a grim, hard land. But it was not always so. The blight of Esau has destroyed its former beauty and richness. It is the blight of ignorance of God. The howling of the jackals at twilight symbolizes the sterility of Islam. The mound that buries ancient Ur is not a handsome thing; yet standing there I saw the whole history of Israel unroll before me. The very atmosphere seemed surcharged with it.

"You know," she resumed after a pause, "a modern novelist-historian has said that 'half the duration of human civilization and the keys to all its chief institutions are to be found before Sargon the First'. And he ruled over Mesopotamia at least 3,000 years before the Christian Era. I think this novelist-historian saw the significance of the present war in a way that has totally escaped most people."

Again she paused and sat for a while musing. The others bent to listen. It had long since become their wont. Presently she resumed. "The Mesopotamian valley has been called the cradle of mankind. But this is only because the earliest records of what we call civilization are found there. The lower portion of the valley was anciently known as Chaldea. There were settlements there as far back as 7,000 years before Christ. This lower part of the country was then called Kengi, the 'land of canals and reeds'. Nippur was the religious center of the country. And other cities that flourished then were Erech, Lagash, Larsam, and Ur.

"The first inhabitants of Chaldea that we have been able to trace were the Shumiro-Accads, already a mixed race, you see. They were called the Accadians. I have told you much about

the kings of Shumir and Accad. What concerns us is that they believed in spirits, and believed that sorcerers, wicked men, knew how to compel the powers of evil to do their bidding and inflict sickness, disaster, and death by a look—the 'evil eye'—by drinks of herbs, and other means. Thus aggressive mental suggestion can be traced back some 9,000 years. Its modes are much more subtle to-day." And she fell silent as her thought went back to Crestelridge.

"The ancient Accadian language was considered more holy than other tongues," she went on. "They did have a peculiar speech and much so-called learning. But their learning, like ours to-day, was not real science, and it did not save them. At a very early date they were conquered by a much less cultivated people speaking the Semitic language. The union of the two peoples made the historic Chaldeans.

"As early as 3,800 B. C. Chaldea comprised many powerful cities or states, and each state was striving for leadership. The question: Who shall be greatest? agitated them nearly 6,000 years ago as much as it has agitated our modern nations. And, like ours, they attempted to answer it by war. We have learned many things about them, but we seem to have learned nothing *from* them. The world is still mesmerized by the error that ideas can be destroyed by slaying people."

The Jew looked up at the girl. "Maeterlinck tells us, I believe, that man once knew more than he knows now. Have our investigations shown that?"

"Bah!" burst from the elderly man, "we've visited the ruins of ancient Babylon; we've seen thousands of their books, clay tablets that go back nearly to 3,000 B. C. And what are they? The merest trash, infused with magic, beliefs in charms and amulets, fortune-telling by the stars!"

"But is the world so far advanced beyond them to-day?" the girl asked. "There were spiritually minded men in those remote days. Enoch worked out his salvation through his right knowledge of the One God. Noah, seeing the wickedness of mankind at its height, saved the world by his hope of the Messiah. Abram, in the midst of fearful idolatry, caught a glimpse of the Christ from afar. It has been said that 'Christianity, with its doctrine of original sin, is but an imperfect echo of older and wiser religions'. *Real* Christianity as envisioned by these men had no doctrine of original sin."

"Humph!" growled the elderly man; "that stuff about original sin was concocted by the busy 'Fathers' at Alexandria and Rome and Athens. I admit that. But, just the same, they based it on the Bible."

"The Bible," the girl continued, "sets forth a great Cosmic

Drama. It portrays the Creation—that is, the revealing of the spiritual universe as the manifestation of the Mind that is God, and its attempted destruction by Mind's suppositional opposite, error, or evil. All down the ages of human history you can trace this attempt to destroy the Word by destroying the people to whom it was entrusted."

"The Jews?" asked Barach.

"No, but Israel," she answered. "It is said that 'the Bible was written by a race, of a race, and for a race'; but only in these last days have we begun to realize that that race was the entire Hebrew nation, not the Jews alone, but *all* Israel. In the Bible, Israel recorded its search for God. In it they recorded the glimpses of Truth that came to them at times. And because of this, error, the suppositional opposite of Truth, has always sought to destroy the Bible and its preservers. The greatest miracle of the ages is the preservation of the literal Word and Israel, its keeper. Nation after nation struck at all Israel. The Hebrew nation was split into two antagonistic houses. The House of Judah was scattered; the House of Israel was sifted among the nations of the earth. The literal Word became buried in a dead language; its spiritual interpretation was ridiculed from the earth; its moral was smothered in the dead letter; it has been driven from our schools; it was all but effaced by the 'Higher Criticism'; and to-day the descendants of the ancient Assyrians are madly striving to crush Israel, its preserver. Yet to-day the great presses of Oxford and Cambridge are clanging as never before, sending the Bible to the uttermost parts of the earth. Is it not wonderful? Is it not awful? And can you not see that it is all mental, all a repetition of the age-long warfare between the forces of good and evil?

" 'In the beginning', the Bible says, 'God created the heaven and the earth'. That is, 'At the beginning', or 'To begin with' —not the beginning of Creation, but a beginning from which we can start. God's Creation has always existed as His infinite reflection. As Mind, God evolves and reveals His numberless ideas that express Him. And God revealed Man, His greatest idea, the compound idea that includes all other ideas and completely manifests the infinite creative Mind. All was good, perfect, harmonious, eternal then. And so it remains to-day. For what could change it, if God is omnipotent?

"Then appeared the 'mist'. And, as I have told you, by this is meant the strange fact that reality seems always to have its shadow in unreality, its direct opposite. And this unreality seems to claim reality and truth for itself. In that respect it counterfeits the real. It is the communal mortal mind, as I

said, that stands as the opposite and negative of the Mind that is God. But it is suppositional and without basis of fact. Jesus called it a liar from the beginning. But it seems to have its laws of evolution, and appears to create a material universe and animals and men. All nature, as we seem to know it, is but the manifestation of this false mind that is without Principle, or God.

"From the beginning this false mind has sinned, has missed the mark, for always it has been error. And so its manifestation has always been discordant, fleeting, dying. Its greatest idea, mortal man, dies because of this inherent sin. The Bible mentions this communal mortal mind as Adam. And Adam is its man, like unto itself.

"Now, as the Mind that is God unfolded its perfect ideas, so the false mind seemed to develop *its* man, slowly and through countless revolting animal forms and mentalities. And, little by little, the curtain began to rise on what we call human history. But the idea of a power not itself began to filter through the mist of mortal mind. Human beings began to feel its influence. And at length there were many who began to think better. And their better thinking manifested outwardly in better living and doing, for man is the result of his thought. Enoch thought so closely to God that he overcame the suggestions of the communal mortal mind and rose above death, the penalty mortals pay for being outside of Principle in supposition.

"But error was striking hard. The mesmerism of evil swept away human civilization in Noah's day, just as it is trying to do to-day through the Germans and the Turks, and just as it will do unless we, like Noah, take refuge in the Ark of Truth. After that trying experience came great men who perceived that only the spiritual is real. And one of the greatest of these was the one who has become my favorite Old Testament character, Abraham.

"Abraham is the type of obedience, without which we shall not see God—without which we shall never see Life. He was obedient to his vision of the One God; and because of this he went into a strange country, that which he did not at first know, namely, life in Spirit. '*Adonai, Jehovah*', he prayed. *Adonai* is the plural number of the Hebrew noun, and by using it Abraham showed that he recognized God as all-inclusive. To regard God as masculine only is to limit Him. In Genesis we read that God refers to Himself as WE. 'Let US make Man in OUR image and likeness.' And in the image of Mind did God make him. God was called Jah-Hovah. The word *Hovah* is the name of Eve, 'the mother of all living'. So God became

known, even in Abraham's day, as 'Father-Mother'. Much later, when men's thinking was deeply material, the term Jehovah was merely the name of the tribal god of the Hebrews.

"Oh, there were wonderful men in those early days when error was striving so desperately to kill the Word! What a grand character was Melchisedec! Perhaps he was Shem, the father of the Semitic races. At any rate it is all but certain that he was the great Philitis, who subdued Egypt without bloodshed or strife. How did he do it? Through his wonderful recognition of the Allness of Mind. And it is all but certain that during his day in Egypt that great monument, Mizraim's 'altar', supposed to be Cheops' tomb, was erected. Did he build it? Who knows? But if he did, then it must have a tremendous significance that has remained veiled to the densely material minds of mortals these forty centuries. We do know, however, that the mysterious 'shepherd kings', of whom Philitis was one, overthrew idolatry in Egypt, and that during this time the Great Pyramid was undoubtedly built.

"In those days there came dream-revelations from the Mind that is God to those who were mentally ready for them. Later, the prophet Joel declared that these would be more prevalent when Truth should be more fully understood. When certain limitations seemed to hold men like Abraham or Jacob—when such as these right-thinkers struggled for guidance—then came 'angels', right intuitions, mental voicings of Truth, that saved them. Some of these 'angels' appeared to come in the form of visions. As such they have come all through the ages. They always show that materiality has no power to injure or defeat the spiritual idea. Can we say that such a vision did not come to the defenders of the right at Mons and Ypres?

"Because of Abram's fidelity to the glimpse of Truth that came to him, that God, Spirit, is One and All, he was made heir to the Word. Thus was he 'chosen'. Then error turned its flood upon him. But he endured, and was rewarded by receiving the promise: for through him the whole material concept, the lie, with all its concomitants of discord, disease, and death, shall be abolished, and spiritual Man be revealed."

She turned to the elderly man. "What have we learned that is real?" she said. "We have visited Mugheir, the site of ancient Ur. We have learned that Ur comprised not only the city, but the region round about, and that 2,800 years before the Christian Era it was exercising hegemony over all southern Babylonia. That year, 2,800 B. C., is probably the date of the event which gave rise to the story of the Flood. Ur was the seat of a great civilization. Its people had made remarkable strides in building, in sculpture, metal-working, gem-

engraving, weaving, writing, literature, law, government, mathematics, and astronomy. It was closely related to Arabia, and had a large commerce with India. It was rich, powerful. What did it lack? *A saving knowledge of God.*

"We have seen the stone door-socket found in the Ur region, and read on it that 'Gemil-Sin, the mighty king, king of Ur, king of the four quarters of the earth, has built for Marduk his favorite temple'. Have we not heard echoes of such mortal boasting in our own day? Marduk, or Merodach, became patron saint of Babylonia and ultimately usurped the title of Bel, the lord, and became almost sole god of the country. And the result? The mighty Babylonian empire perished miserably in a ballroom!

"About 2,000 B. C. the city of Ur was the capital of a powerful monarch, Urukh, or Lig-Bagas. He founded the great temple dedicated to the moon-god Hurki. The atmosphere of Ur was now fetid with idolatry. There was dense materialism, and perpetual warfare with surrounding countries to secure trade and material gain. Ur was a great maritime center, being then on the Persian Gulf. It was a great religious center and the seat of a powerful priesthood. Royalty developed anciently from the priesthood, you know, and was at first a form of priestly rule. The first great historical character that we have traced is the Semite Sharrukin, king of Agade, or Accad. He is Sargon the First. He reigned about 3,800 B. C., and was the Charlemagne of his time. He had chariots of bronze. He did for science, literature, and organization what Charlemagne did for these in western Europe in the ninth century. But he worshiped the popular goddess Ishtar.

"The religion of Ur about the year 2,000 B. C. was polytheistic and had developed from the worship of the celestial bodies—the sun, moon, stars. These gods were Il—the Hebrew EL—Ana, Belus, Hea Sansi—the sun—and Nebo and Ishtar. The city was reared on a foundation of dense materialism and religious superstition. But it possessed a citizen, Abram by name, who left it to avoid its error and to search for a 'city with foundations'.

"Abram appeared during the period of Elamite supremacy. He traced his lineage to Heber, or Eber, from whom came the Hebrew people. He went out seeking the spiritual understanding of God, which is likened unto a city, the conscious abode of spiritual sense. This 'city' is the 'New Jerusalem' that John saw on Patmos."

"Are you going to spiritualize everything?" demanded Penberry at this juncture.

"Without the spiritual interpretation, the Bible is mere

Babel," the girl replied. "It is likewise utter confusion and contradiction without the knowledge that 'Israel' means the ten tribes constituting the House of Israel that became 'lost'."

"And you insist that they are . . ."

"I insist that they are to-day fighting the Germans in France. It will be revealed to you. . ."

"Egad! if it's true, then I am forced to become a Christian. And so is Barach."

"In the same way that you are forced to believe that two and two are four, and not five," she returned, smiling up at him.

Evening had come stealthily on as they talked. The sun had dropped, a bulging, crimson mass, behind the hills that shut out the Assyrian desert. Beyond them in heaps of dust lay fallen Babylon, prophetic symbol of error's doom.

The girl rose. "We must postpone our talk about Israel," she said. "I am writing to Madam Galuth to-night."

And when she had left, it seemed to Simeon Penberry that night had abruptly closed about him.

CHAPTER 2

FOR many months Simeon Penberry had known that, far from being the leader of this unique expedition, he was only a humble follower. In Marian Whittier there burned a fire that awed him, as it did the other members of the little party. It was to him as if a mighty spirit were hovering over the girl, animating, instructing, guiding her, warning him to watch, wait, and serve, but not to interfere. And he obeyed and placed his vast fortune at her disposal and fell back to follow whither she might lead. But he followed on the tip-toe of keen expectancy. To him, as to the others, the prescience of a tremendous revelation seemed always to move before them.

It seemed strange to Simeon Penberry that the girl made never a reference to Alden Cragg, and he early began to doubt the accuracy of his judgment of her. As they traveled and delved, the limitations with which he had surrounded his concept of the girl fell away, and he began to see her character in proportions that first amazed, then awed him. And shame crept upon him for his treatment of her in Penberry Hall, and humility quenched his natural brusquerie, bridled his spirit of domination, and quickly rendered him her willing servitor.

With Alden Cragg's departure Penberry had expected that

Marian would wish to leave Jerusalem at once. Not so, however. For days she continued there, searching, prying, questioning, musing. She became a familiar figure in its streets, its marts, its synagogues, and soon rabbi, priest, and doctor began to welcome her visits and the deep questions and incisive dialogue that they always entailed. Then, apparently satisfied, she one day announced to the impatient Penberry that she was ready to go down into Egypt.

But again disappointment awaited him. He could endure the silence with which she surrounded herself as she lingered, day after day, in the great museums and libraries; he had expected that she would seek acquaintance with the learned, and would spend weeks in discussion with them; but he felt that he had a right to expect that, after days at the Great Pyramid, she would confide to him her thought regarding Cheops' tomb. "But you are not ready," she answered him, when he at length demanded the results of her investigations. "I . . . I don't know that I am . . . myself," she added, hesitatingly. Then, seeing the look of dismay in his face, she went to him and put her arms about his neck. "Wait," she said. "For I am waiting with you."

Then came the Mesopotamian expedition. North of them the British were sweeping the Turkish remnant from the fabled Garden of Eden. Under the protection of Israel, Marian dwelt for days in ancient Ur, in Babylon, and by the great river. She appeared to Penberry at times like a disembodied spirit; she moved as if in a trance; she said little, and when she did speak it was—oddly enough!—generally with the Egyptian Zuleyka. Yet at times she called upon the wondering David Barach for knowledge of matters Jewish. . .

But now, in the Persian town of Khanikan, which was once Ecbatana, the great fortress and capital city of the ancient Medes, the girl's thoughts at last found voice. And Simeon Penberry, as he listened, heard things that transformed his soul.

"Peter says, in his First Epistle," the girl abruptly began as they were assembling one day in the little room which they had made their study, "that no prophecy of Scripture 'is of any private interpretation'. The word 'private' means 'separate' or 'alone'. No prophecy can be given a material interpretation alone. The prophecies, or 'promises', recorded in the Bible were truths that came to those men of old whose mentalities were sufficiently dematerialized to receive them—just as the sunlight will pour into a room if we remove the material barriers. It was prophesied—as a promise—that King David's throne should endure forever. Does this refer to a material

kingdom? But 'David' means 'beloved'—nay, better still, it is often translated 'Divine Love.' And we may be sure that the throne of Divine Love, God Himself, will endure. And so a double significance attaches to Jesus' custom of referring to himself as a Son of David.

"The spiritual is always first: it is the primitive. The material is the communal mortal mind's counterfeit of it. So mortal mind has counterfeited even the Bible promises. Indeed, it *has* to! And the spiritual fact that the Kingdom of David, Divine Love, shall endure is counterfeited materially. To-day a king still sits on David's ancient throne. Do you doubt it? But it shall be proved to you. Now if this is proved, then, in discovering the human counterfeit, the counter-fable, we know that the *real* spiritual fact exists, and we are proving that the Bible promises and prophecies are true. For always back of the material counterfeit is the Truth.

"Abraham sacrificed everything material for Truth, even his beloved son Isaac. No wonder he realized that he was blessed! No wonder he knew that in him, in such understanding of Spirit, all nations would be blessed! He had made mighty demonstrations of his understanding of God, not the least of which was the demonstration of Isaac. And with proof after proof of spiritual Omnipotence before him, he knew that he should be the father of many nations. And he altered his name from Abram to Abraham—and Sarai's to Sarah—in announcement of the fact. He had much to overcome, and he made mistakes through fear and zeal, he alternately caught and lost his vision, yet he endured and became a blessing to all mankind. For he discerned the Christ.

"It was to those who accepted the truth regarding the One God that the prophecies were fulfilled. Ishmael, whose modern descendants are the Arabs, and Esau, whose modern progeny are the Turks, had not this truth. But Isaac accepted it. And of Isaac's sons, it was Jacob who was receptive to it. Oh, it cost Jacob a struggle! But he wrestled with error and overcame it. And because of this overcoming he became Israel. . ."

She paused, and her thought seemed to stray afar. "There are some to-day," she said, speaking low, "who are being transformed from Jacob to Israel."

Again she fell silent. Then, brightening: "The name 'Israel' in the Hebrew language is a compound of *'Yisso'*, meaning 'prevailing with', 'striving with', and *'El'*, the name of God. So to be a true Israelite does not depend upon material or human ancestry. It is not a question of race, but of demonstrable knowledge of the One God.

"Jacob's son Joseph rose to the rulership of Egypt. You

may read about it in the Bible, in Josephus, and elsewhere. And Jacob's descendants became a great host in that country. But they did not retain the true concept of God, and error in the person of a hostile Pharaoh eventually enslaved them. But Moses taught them how to get rid of their false concept of God. And this resulted in their freedom from the darkness of Egyptian bondage. Then Moses gave them the Decalogue by which to work out their salvation. And this has become the basis of the Anglo-Saxon law of to-day.

"The descendants of Jacob were formed into the nation of Israel when Moses led them out of Egypt. They were then a vast army of fugitive slaves seeking a new home. They typified mankind seeking God.

"Then came the wandering in the wilderness. And it is at this point that you raise the question of the historical accuracy of the Bible. But you must remember always that the ancient Hebrews used the Old Testament for the purpose of conveying moral lessons and imparting spiritual instruction. In the exodus they portrayed the wandering of mankind through the wilderness of false beliefs of the communal mortal mind. Whether they were actually forty years in the wilderness between Egypt and Palestine, we do not know, any more than we know that Jesus spent forty of our days in the desert, for numbers had a peculiar significance to the Hebrews. What we are concerned with is that in each case the story portrays the individual struggle out of the flesh, out of the carnal mind, into spiritual perception—out of death into the true understanding of Life.

"Moses became their leader because he separated Spirit from matter. He so understood Principle that he put to dismay the materialistic magicians and priests of Pharaoh's court. His conduct roused mortal mind to fury, and it pursued him. At the Red Sea he had to prove again the mastery of Mind over carnal belief of life and power in matter. And every step of the way was a demonstration. His people chafed under the discipline necessary to work out their salvation—oh, I know what that means! They much preferred ease in matter. And even in Canaan they refused to be obedient to Principle, but mingled with the idolators and yielded themselves to evil. They were disappointed in the 'promised land', for they saw it only materially, whereas the real promised land toward which Moses was leading them was a consciousness of Principle, and in order to enable them to acquire such consciousness it was necessary to take them away from the deadly materiality typified by the fleshpots of carnally-minded Egypt. Moses' task was superhuman; great as he was, he failed to withstand their

fretfulness and nagging, and struck the rock in his own name. The intrusion of 'self' into his work kept him from fully demonstrating the Allness of God, and he did not overcome death, did not enter the promised land of complete spiritual consciousness." She hesitated, and her thought went back to Crestelridge and to her fear for Alden. "When anything human enters a demonstration of Principle," she said slowly, "the demonstration will fail.

"But," she went on eagerly, "to continue our story. The Hebrew nation had become a loose confederation of tribes—twelve of them, bearing the names of Jacob's twelve sons. For 400 years they were governed by judges; then the people, now densely materialistic in thought and conduct, demanded a kingdom like those of the Gentiles. They wanted to be spared the trouble of thinking, and so they clamored to be permitted to put their necks under the yoke of mortal man. They wanted to be governed by something else than Principle. It was the work of animal magnetism. They were simply hypnotized. So Saul was made their king. So to-day mankind have sought unto their preachers and doctors and professors and Kaisers, rather than be subject to their God, who is their very Life, but who requires righteousness, which is right-thinking."

"It was in the selection of Saul as king that Moses' political system was definitely abandoned," offered David Barach. "His system was really never used. I wish it had been, for it might have afforded a solution of problems in government that still baffle the world. In his scheme a constitutional form of government was indicated; by it no autocrat ever could have secured control. The priesthood was possessed by the tribe of Levi; the tribe of Joseph possessed the birthright; and the scepter was held by the tribe of Judah. But the people were not ready for a form of government so advanced. They needed a strongly centralized form. And Saul was chosen to give it to them."

Marian nodded and resumed. "But Saul had no capacity for governing. He became a selfish autocrat. David at length headed a revolt and established himself as an independent ruler at Hebron. Later, Saul was deposed, and David ruled over all Israel. You may read his romantic story in the first Book of Samuel. David was followed by his great son, Solomon, under whom Israel experienced its Golden Age. When Solomon passed away his son Rehoboam became king.

"Then came the great schism, the event that has caused so much confusion in our understanding of the Bible. Ten of the tribes revolted against Rehoboam's tyranny and chose Jeroboam to be their king. This was in 975 B. C. From this time

on there were two Hebrew kingdoms: the House of Israel, comprising the ten rebellious tribes under Jeroboam, with their capital at Samaria; and the House of Judah, comprising the two tribes of Judah and Benjamin under King Rehoboam, and having their capital at Jerusalem.

"The House of Judah then attempted to restore the former House of David, the Kingdom of Hebron, for they had remained faithful to David. But the birthright was in possession of the Tribe of Joseph. And it was a tremendous political weapon in those days. And Joseph had joined the rebellious tribes that formed the House of Israel. So the House of David was wrecked.

"The House of Israel, on the other hand, believed that when Rehoboam died the dynasty of David would be restored to them; but the reunion of all the tribes was never brought about. Judah remained outside. The people of the House of Judah gradually became known as Jews. And down through the ages they have cherished the hope that they would eventually be placed in possession of the throne of all Israel. It was this restoration of the ancient House of David that was so eagerly looked for when Jesus appeared. The Jewish leaders delicately approached Jesus on the matter. But he told them the parable of the stone which the builders rejected. That stone was literally Joseph; the Jews had forfeited their hope of ever ruling the Kingdom of Israel. They were spiritually incapable. The answer enraged the Jews, and they denounced Jesus and plotted his death.

"For well they knew that the House of Israel was in existence, though regarded now as a race of idolatrous barbarians.

"In the great revolt of 975 B. C. it was the support of the tribes of Joseph—Ephraim and Manasseh—that had turned the scale against the House of David and given the Kingdom of Israel to Jeroboam. The two divisions into which the Hebrew nation had split—the House of Judah and the House of Israel—remained bitterly hostile to each other. That of Judah sought to maintain the orthodox Hebrew religion; but Jeroboam, King of the House of Israel, would have none of it. He therefore instituted the worship of the golden calf, and led his people into a degenerated form of worship that was worse than heathenism. Thus did Jeroboam make Israel to sin.

"The two rival kingdoms fought and plotted each other's destruction for more than two hundred years. The House of Israel again and again sought by war to force a union upon the House of Judah, or to absorb it by diplomacy or intrigue. Neither House could forego its jealousies; their religious differences could not be reconciled; and the question of which

dynasty should possess the Kingdom was impossible of settlement. The House of Israel sought foreign alliances. This brought in alien and idolatrous practices. The religion of Sinai faded from their minds. Baal became all but supreme. National degeneracy and incessant warfare brought the inevitable result.

"Like buzzards the Babylonians, Assyrians, and surrounding Gentile nations gathered to watch the fray and feast on the carcasses. Judah invited the Assyrians to attack Israel. And both Houses ultimately fell a prey to this common enemy, but Israel first. In the ninth year of Hosea, about 721 B. C., Jeroboam's capital city, Samaria, was captured and the House of Israel went into bondage to the Assyrians, never to return. The nation was completely ruined, blotted out."

David Barach gave vent to an exclamation. "That's just it! The ten tribes disappeared, were absorbed, and were never heard of again! So the Bible promises . . ."

"You are mistaken, David," the girl returned gently. "In the year 709 B. C., twelve years after they were brought in chains from Samaria, the people of the House of Israel were working as slaves, building the city of Ecbatana, the ancient Median city on whose site we are now standing."

CHAPTER 3

"DO you agree with me thus far, David?" Marian asked some days later, after Barach had pored over her story and checked her references and citations. And Barach answered her that he did.

"And do you see how it is that not all Israelites are Jews, but all Jews are Israelites?"

"I see how Barach is a Jew," put in Simeon Penberry; "but I don't admit yet that I am an Israelite."

"David Barach is descended from the House of Judah," she answered; "you are come from the House of Israel. And Abraham is your common father. The name 'Jew' is a corruption of the name 'Judah'," she went on. "It first occurs in the Bible in the second Book of Kings. This was some twelve centuries after Abram left Ur. The great error of calling *all* the descendants of Abraham 'Jews' has caused at least seven-eighths of the Bible to be woefully misunderstood, and has made the Old Testament practically a closed book. Abraham, descended from Heber, or Eber, was a Hebrew. His descendants are *all* Hebrews. The Jews are Hebrews. But

—mark this!—*the Hebrews are by no means all Jews.* When you have mastered this distinction, then you have seized the key that opens Old Testament history and renders it not only intelligible, but makes it, next to the New Testament, the most fascinatingly interesting book in the world. This distinction once admitted, all the Bible prophecies and promises fall into their respective places in order, and we stand astonished as we see how they have been fulfilled to the respective Houses of Judah and Israel, how they are being fulfilled to-day, and how they are certain to be fulfilled in the future.

"For what are some of the Bible prophecies concerning the Jews, the House of Judah? They are to be a scattered people, dispersed, yet always known; to be without a nationality; specially persecuted; to retain a special type of features; to retain their Mosaic service until returned to their own land; to reject the Christ that was to come through them; to be known as a by-word and a reproach; to be without might; to be strangers in all lands; never to be a nation, or have a king, until their union with the House of Israel and their acceptance of the Christ; and . . ."

"And to be profiteers and pawnbrokers!" interjected Penberry.

Marian and Barach laughed. "To have money, yes," the girl replied; "but not to be owners of landed property until toward the latter days. And now, David," turning to Barach, "have these prophecies been fulfilled, or are they being fulfilled to-day?"

"Absolutely," he said.

"There are many other prophecies concerning the Jews. You can find them scattered all through the Old Testament," she continued. "But now to the ten-tribed House of Israel. It is prophesied that they should become lost; they should be divorced from the Mosaic law; they should not only lose their name, but their language as well; they are to become a head nation, to be a company of nations; to be great colonizers and to possess the isles of the sea; they are to wander many years and at length find an island home in the West; other peoples are to die out before them; they are to have a perpetual monarchy and to possess David's throne; they are to be mighty in war on land and sea; they are to be money-lenders; and they are to possess Palestine and to invite the House of Judah —the Jews—to return—but first they were to be driven out from their own land and sown among the nations. And then, after being lost to view, they were to be found, and to become the sons of God, and be used for the conversion of the world. . ."

"Some of these predictions admirably fit the British," Penberry remarked. "But proceed. What became of the House of Israel?"

"Isaiah, that great prophet-statesman, foresaw the terrible consequences of Israel's moral degeneracy, and begged them to return to the understanding of the One God. But they were too deeply mesmerized by materiality. Then he foretold their destruction. The first chapter of Hosea sounds their doom. Evil thought is *always* externalized in evil consequences. Samaria fell before the Assyrians in 721 B. C. By the year 676 B. C. the prophecies had been fulfilled to the letter: the House of Israel had been entirely removed from Palestine, and alien colonists were sent by the conquering Assyrians to settle in Samaria.

"Shalmaneser had the account of his overthrow of Samaria recorded on stones which we have read. Do you recall it? *'I am Shalmaneser . . . being king I have no equal among the kings. . . I besieged and occupied the town of Samaria; I brought into captivity 27,280 persons; I took them to Assyria. . .'*"

"Sounds strangely modern," Penberry murmured. "An echo from Potsdam."

"The House of Israel was transferred bodily into Assyria and Media," Marian continued. "It was a black hour for them. Yet, strangely, the prophets continued to foretell the glorious future of desolated Israel. They declared that Israel would wander toward the east and north; would be sifted through all nations; would run to and fro seeking the Word of the Lord; would be reduced by wars and famine; but would eventually be planted in their own land and give the law to the world. These prophets knew that error had limitations.

"The captive people of the House of Israel were taken, some to Nineveh, others into Media, to Halah and Habor by the river Gozan. Gozan probably is the river Uzen, which flows into the Caspian Sea near Resht. We have just been through this region. In ancient times, before the captivity of Israel, this particular country to which the exiles were taken was known as Gutium, the land of Guta. It was the Goyim, of which Tidal was king, long before. This is the Tidal of the fourteenth chapter of Genesis, who, with Kudur-Lagamar, waged war against Lot and was punished by Abraham. The great war of to-day is but a continuation of that ancient attempt against the Word.

"Thus the House of Israel went into captivity. But Israel did not remain in bondage. The mighty Assyrian empire presently began to wane. The Medes and Babylonians were wax-

ing strong. Pharaoh-Necho of Egypt saw it all, and hurried up to embrace what he considered an opportunity to master the world. He demanded permission of Josiah, king of the House of Judah, to pass through the territory of Judah; and the prophet Jeremiah supported the demand. But Josiah foolishly resisted, against counsel, and was slain in the battle of Megiddo, and the Kingdom of Judah ruined. Four years later Nebuchadnezzar, at the head of the Babylonian and Median armies, met the Egyptians in the famous battle of Carchemish, in 608 B. C., and utterly routed them. Then Nineveh and the Assyrian empire fell, and Nebuchadnezzar turned to battle with the invading Scythians, who had come down, under their two chiefs, Gog and Magog, from the Russian steppes. Defeating them, Nebuchadnezzar turned his attention westward to the tottering House of Judah.

"The battle of Carchemish was one of the decisive battles of the world. It was the captive House of Israel's grand opportunity. Jeremiah had been in correspondence with them, and he now vigorously spurred them to action. Israel sprang up, hurled aside the weak garrison left to protect the land of Guta, and escaped. They were advised by Tobit, a leader in the Israelitish community and a man of importance in Assyrian affairs, that it would not be practicable to attempt to return to Palestine, for Nebuchadnezzar was invading it and Jerusalem was certain to fall. The western passes were all barred by hostile armies. The strong nations of the Parthians and the Persians lay to the east. There was but one way for Israel to go: north, through the narrow gap by which the invading Scythians had come.

"Esdras—this is the way the Greeks wrote the name of Ezra—gives an account of this flight. You may read it in the thirteenth chapter of Esdras, in the Apocrypha. It says that they went into a region called Arsareth. The tribes probably followed the bed of the Euphrates during the dry season and entered what is now Armenia. Arsareth is also written Arzareth, Arzar, and Ararath. This last name is the equivalent of Ararat, the name by which Armenia used to be known. And will you believe me," turning to Penberry, "when I tell you that the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, to which you so proudly trace your lineage, states that the first inhabitants of Britain were the Britons who came from Armenia?"

He made as if to speak, but checked himself. She waited a moment for his unvoiced protest, then continued: "And so, from this very region where we are now, the House of Israel fled north and through the Caucasus into modern Russia, through the very mountain pass that to this day is called the

'Gates of Israel'. The lost ten tribes had now entered upon their great destiny."

"And I presume that already they were called English, eh?" laughed the incredulous Penberry, unable to contain himself longer.

The girl turned her serious eyes upon him. "They were," she said quietly. "In those ancient days it was the custom of foreigners to name a people from their form of worship. After King Jeroboam of the House of Israel had repudiated the Mosaic form of worship and set up the golden calves, the people of Israel were often known as 'calf men'. In their own language *engel* means 'calf', and *ish* means 'man'. So they were known as the *Engelish.*"

* * * * * *

To Simeon Penberry the Bible, always an unknown, neglected compilation of heated oriental imaginations, slowly began to take on a new character. He had been hitherto a consistent type of the human mind that sees nought in the Scriptures but the literal, and sweeps that aside with the definitive comment: "Historically inaccurate." Now, with the Bible before him, with those portions having direct reference to the House of Israel underlined in red ink, those dealing with the House of Judah alone underscored in green, and all references to the Gentile nations in black, he sat astonished at the profound story revealed in the history of the twelve tribes. Where before, when no distinction had been made between these Houses of Judah and Israel, the books were found at variance with one another; where Isaiah appeared to declare Hosea false, and Jeremiah seemed to impugn them both; where Zechariah flatly contradicted Zephaniah, and Joel and Amos could not possibly be reconciled; now, under Marian's guidance, perfect harmony was established and the story of Israel unfolded to him like a fascinating romance. Thereafter his search for the whereabouts of Israel to-day became a passion.

"They escaped north into the 'wilderness' described in the book of Hosea," Marian explained in answer to his now persistent questioning, taking up the story of the House of Israel after the battle of Carchemish in 608 B. C. "They could not, they dared not, go back; they must face the barren plains of southern Russia, stripped of all that mortals deem essential to happiness. Truly, they were a people under punishment; they were despised even by the barbarians who dwelt in those sterile regions.

"Those barbarians were the Scythians. I told you that bands of them had gone down to invade weakened Assyria. Nebuchadnezzar drove them back . . ."

"But does history cite them?"

"Herodotus gives an account of these returning Scythians meeting at the entrance of their own country with an army of escaped slaves. These slaves were the fleeing House of Israel. A battle was fought with them, but it was not decisive. Then diplomacy was resorted to. A compromise was effected and the House of Israel agreed to reduce its strength by dividing. The tribe of Joseph, comprising the two tribes of Joseph's sons, Manasseh and Ephraim, went toward the west and settled along the stream that is now the Danube river. There they eventually became known as the Getae. The tribe of Dan separated from the rest and became known as the Thyssagetae. And the remaining seven tribes, the bulk of the House of Israel, went to the east, around the Caspian Sea, and located in eastern Scythia. They were the mass of Israel, and they became known in time as the Massagetae. These names are not used in the Bible records, for the prophets naturally continued to refer to the Getae as 'Joseph', or 'Ephraim', and to the seven tribes forming the Massagetae as 'Israel'. Joseph and Israel, now separated, remained distinct nations for many centuries.

"While they were still in captivity Jeremiah had prophesied that Israel would yet occupy a 'pleasant land'. So the Massagetae called this eastern country which they now went to 'Casiapha'. The word is Chaldean and means 'pleasant' or 'desirable'. It is now written Caspian, and the Caspian Sea to-day bears the name. In the eighth chapter of Ezra we find a reference to Iddo, the chief at Casiapha. Ezra had sent to this man of the Massagetae to re-establish the Temple service. This land east of the Caspian Sea where Israel settled after their flight from the Land of Guta is the 'Land of Israel' that Ezekiel refers to.

"Israel—the Massagetae—were now again close to Media; they found their new home materially pleasant; they rejected the missionary prophets sent to them, and adhered to their ancient idols. It was political expediency too for them to worship the gods of the Medes. And Ezekiel saw it, when he was sent to try to persuade them back to an understanding of the One God. He made a powerful appeal: you may read it in the twentieth chapter of the book of Ezekiel. But he failed. Israel decided, for political and other reasons, to remain heathen.

"But their national name, 'Israel', was too closely identified with the God of their Hebrew ancestors, EL, whom they had deliberately rejected. They decided to abandon it. They call themselves now 'the people of Guta'. They become the 'Gutathiuda'. This word 'thiuda' is a Gothic word, meaning 'a people'.

"Thus was prophecy again fulfilled. Israel—even to her name—was swallowed up among the Gentiles, sunk in the depths of barbarism.

"And now for half a century the House of Israel, as the Massagetae, remain in their 'pleasant land' east of the Caspian Sea. But Jeremiah had prophesied that the Houses of Israel and Judah should meet. And so they did when, out of the north, Israel eventually swept down to the destruction of her old enemy, Babylon.

"After the battle of Carchemish, Nebuchadnezzar had laid siege to Jerusalem, capital city of the House of Judah. Judah was brought under tribute to the Babylonian. It was the beginning of the fall. At length, in the year 587 B. C., Nebuchadnezzar overthrew Zedekiah, last king of Judah, and destroyed Jerusalem and its famous Temple. The House of Judah was taken into captivity and never was a kingdom again.

"Nearly fifty years later came another great event: Cyrus, king of the Medes and Persians, captured Babylon. And Israel, the Massagetae, came down out of the north and fought in the army of Cyrus as the 'battle-axe of the Lord' against Babylon. Their kinsmen, the House of Judah, were inside the walls of Babylon, as slaves. And the leader of enslaved Judah was Daniel, who, long before, had prophesied that Babylon, as the head of gold of the great image, should be destroyed by the Kingdom of Stone. Here again prophecy was literally fulfilled. And Israel, from being a despised barbarian nation, became conqueror of what had been the mightiest kingdom of the world. You have already read the record on the 'cylinder of Cyrus', where it states that 'On the sixteenth day Gobryas, Governor of Guta, and the army of Cyrus came to Babylon', and how 'the rebels of Guta' closed the gates. It was these 'rebels of Guta' who were the captive House of Judah, and who, under Daniel's leadership, assisted in the overthrow of the city.

"And now did there seem a grand opportunity for a reconciliation between the Houses of Israel and Judah and a reunion. But their religious differences held them apart. The 'Gutathiuda', or 'people of Guta', were devoted to Merodach, the patron god of Cyrus. And Merodach was the antithesis of the god of Judah. You can read all about this great question in the Book of Isaiah.

"Both Daniel and Zechariah warned and threatened Israel, but could not induce this mesmerized people to abandon Merodach for the One God. Daniel assembled the apostate people, and in the presence of Cyrus himself and all the chiefs and dignitaries read from the scrolls of the Hebrew writings the prophecies of the very events that had just been happening.

Israel may have been impressed, but her people were now conquerors and freemen, and they did not intend to abase themselves to the God of enslaved Judah. Moreover, the flattery and patronage of the great Cyrus, who hailed Israel as brothers in the worship of Merodach, was tremendously effective. Cyrus had no desire to see a great Hebrew nation erected through a union now of the Houses of Israel and Judah. And Israel knew it and acted accordingly. And therefore the One God was again rejected in favor of the mythical Merodach and Israel remained, deliberately, heathen and went back to their pleasant land east of the Caspian Sea.

"One result of Israel's great showing in the overthrow of Babylon was the stimulating of a desire within Cyrus to make himself king over these Massagetae and take unto himself the rights prophetically reserved for the House of David. Herodotus tells us of the warning Crœsus gave Cyrus at this time, but Cyrus was not to be dissuaded. Isaiah, chapters twenty-one and twenty-two, tells about this campaign of Cyrus against Israel. Zechariah had warned and warned Israel, telling them that disaster would befall them for their treachery toward the One God. And so the Elamites—the Persians—again attacked Israel. A third of the army of the Massagetae were slain; but Cyrus paid for it with his own life, and the Kingdom of Stone proceeded further in consuming the great image of Nebuchadnezzar's dream by destroying its breast and arms, the Kingdom of Silver. In the Book of Isaiah we find Cyrus named as 'the shepherd'. In Jeremiah the 'shepherd' is to lead the attackers against Babylon. In Jeremiah again we find that Israel is the rod which is to break in pieces the 'shepherd'. Again prophecy is fulfilled to the letter."

"The Old Testament," interrupted David Barach, "often refers to Israel as the 'people called by My Name'."

"Yes," Marian agreed. "The name of God in the Gothic language is 'Guth'. So the 'Guta-thiuda', or 'people of Guta', are really the people of God, called by His name."

"But," Penberry put in, a bit anxiously, "do you think it may be a coincidence?"

Marian shook her head. "God's name has come down through all history in the various names by which Israel has been known. In the Hebrew language the name of God is 'EL'. So we have 'Yisso-El', or 'Israel'. In the Getic language we find that the name of God is 'An'. So it appears in the name of the 'Angles'. In the Norse language God's name is 'As'. So we have it in the 'Asar'. We shall find that Israel and the Goths and the Angles and the Asar are one people, literally called by God's name.

"If you will study the Book of Esdras, in the Apocrypha, you will find that Darius, who succeeded Cyrus as king of the Persians, also wanted to become king of Israel. Probably he knew that as ruler of united Persia and Israel he could make himself master of the world. He even proposed to marry the daughter of the Queen of the Massagetae. His offer was proudly rejected; but Israel saw that by thus offending the powerful Persian king she had exposed herself to the greatest danger. She therefore fled before him from her pleasant land east of the Caspian Sea and sought a new home.

"The Massagetae fled westward toward what is now known as the Black Sea. There they founded the city of Tomi, doubtless named after their Queen Tomyris. This city was well known afterward, and Ovid was sent there as an exile. It is probable that the Massagetae were trying to reach the Getae—Israel in peril was desperately trying to join Ephraim and Manasseh, the two tribes of Joseph that were located in what was anciently known as Dacia, north of Greece and along the Danube river. Herodotus tells us that Darius resorted to strategy and hurried his armies northwest, through the country surrounding modern Constantinople and up through ancient Thrace and into the land of the Getae, who were not powerful enough to resist the advance of the great Persian army. This prevented Israel from joining Joseph. The date of this event is about six years after the date of the Book of Zechariah.

"But Darius found himself in no position to give battle, so he withdrew his army and lamely announced that conquest beyond the Danube was not to be desired. So Israel, still rejecting the One God, but nevertheless bearing His name, was left to work out her destiny in her new home in and around what is now known as the Crimea, in southern Russia. She had occupied strategic positions from which she might have dominated the world, but she had repulsed the prophet Ezra who sought to convert her people to the true understanding. They were running to and fro, seeking God, yet still clinging to their idols. Night seemed to settle upon them. They fell under the influence of witchcraft and magic. And their mental darkness was complete when they at length accepted as their leader the crafty, subtle-minded Odin, who brought them under the mesmerism of the 'good old German god'.

"Thus human history repeats itself. Odin was not of the House of Israel, he was a Jotun. His native country was Jotunheim, the country of the Teutones. The Gutones, who dwelt on the river Vistula, were known in the third century B. C. They and the Teutones and the Jotuns were one and the same people. The Teutones were doubtless the Cimmerians, whom

Israel had pushed 'with horns' across the river Dneiper. Zechariah makes an astonishing prophecy regarding an 'idol shepherd'. He says: 'the sword shall be upon his arm, and upon his right eye: his arm shall be clean dried up, and his right eye utterly destroyed'. Accounts state that Odin had lost an eye and that he had a withered arm. . ."

"Egad!" exclaimed Penberry. "We have a modern Odin up in Potsdam who has led Israel sadly astray! And *he* has a withered arm!"

Marian smiled. "The mesmerized House of Israel considered Odin a very wise person," she said. "But, meantime, the barbarians known as the Teutones were fighting the legions of Rome and were being defeated. So Odin persuaded the House of Israel to follow him through the land of the Teutones to a place called Gardariki, which is modern Prussia. From there he led them across the Elbe river and north as far as the Baltic Sea. All along the route they planted colonies—probably families or associated clans merely dropped off and remained to settle in a favorable spot. But prophecy was being fulfilled at every step. Israel was pushing the alien peoples aside 'with horns'. And Odin was Israel's god-man.

"We have now traced the House of Israel down to the first century of the Christian Era. We find them then settled as colonies among German tribes. They were known as the 'Angles', although each colony had its own particular name, those colonizing the Jotun region were known as Jotuns or Jutes; others were known as Saxons. The colony in Scandinavia called their new home 'Gautar-land', or 'Guta-land'. The colonists were settled thickest in modern Holstein. And thus they dwelt for more than four centuries, much of the time bitterly hostile to their Teutonic neighbors, always retaining their own customs, language, and laws to a very marked extent. The basis of their language was the ancient Median. They played chess, a game which they brought from Persia and introduced into Europe. They clung to the Chaldean beliefs in magic and sorcery. They developed a gloomy poem about a hero named Beowulf, who was 'a man of the Geatas'—the Getae. And in their mythology we find twelve god-men who represent the twelve tribes of ancient Israel. The Angles seem to have held themselves aloof as a very superior people, and they seem to have taken comparatively little from their neighbors or their surrounding environment.

"And always Israel was pushing 'with horns'. Fortunately, the Roman Empire was so weakened that the peoples pushed by expanding Israel could break through toward Rome. When the pushing became too strong, the great 'migration of the

nations' took place. Jeremiah had said that Israel was to 'flee from the land of the Chaldees and be as the he-goat among the flocks'. Israel led and pushed; the surrounding nations moved from before them; the world was astir. Then the Angles, the seven-tribed House of Israel, moved over into Britain, 'the isles of the sea', and found their home. There they set up a Heptarchy, composed of seven kingdoms. . ."

"Egad!" ejaculated Penberry, slapping his sides.

"The migrations of the nations on the continent of Europe ceased," Marian concluded, "and English history had begun."

CHAPTER 4

"BUT you forget," cried Penberry, "that English history can hardly be said to begin before the Norman Conquest, in 1066! The English are not English without the Norman infusion!"

"True," Marian agreed. "And so let us go back to the Getae, the tribe of Joseph, composed of the two tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh, whom we left dwelling on the Danube in the country that roughly corresponds to modern Roumania. Hosea has much to say about them. So has Isaiah in the 28th and 65th chapters of that wonderful book. And Herodotus wrote about them, as well as about the Massagetae and the Scythians, among whom these exiles went to dwell in the barren steppes of southern Russia. The Greeks came in frequent contact with the Getae, who lived just north of Greece. They were said to be a melancholy people, who lamented the birth of a child, but rejoiced over the death of a man. They were often selfish, cruel, and immoral. And they seemed subject to peculiar religious revivals. It has been said that it was by these Getae, rather than by the Jews, that the story of the birth of a Saviour was spread through the world when Jesus was born. Jesus later showed that he knew of their existence, and he sent missionaries to them. Where they first settled, the Getae dwelt for some seven centuries. They recorded little or nothing of their own history—at least, nothing has come down to us directly from them. And but for what their enemies and neighbors said about them we should be in darkness regarding their story.

"One thing is certain, however, these people appeared to have no sympathy with the religious mythology of the Greeks. They had rejected the One God, the same as their kinsmen, the Massagetae, but they did not accept the pagan gods. They

seemed to have remembered that the God they once acknowledged was Spirit. And through the centuries they ceased not to look for a Messiah.

"They do not appear to have been aggressively warlike, although terrible when on the defensive. Like the Massagetae, they seemed to consider themselves much superior to their neighbors and to hold themselves aloof from them. Philip of Macedon, and his son, Alexander the Great, attacked them, but wisely concluded that their conquest was not desirable. The bowmen of Joseph were a bit too formidable, as their descendants, the Norman bowmen, later proved to be. They became known as the 'invincible Getae'. Later, Julius Cæsar planned a great campaign against them, but death intervened—perhaps saving his reputation. Something more than a century afterward Rome again came into contact with Joseph, the Getae. But they were then known as the Goths.

"Behind the Getae at this time lay their brethren, the Massagetae. Their united strength must have been very formidable. And it offered tremendous possibilities. It was these possibilities that aggressive suggestion seems to have presented to Jesus, in the recorded third temptation. Satan is shown offering him all the kingdoms of the world for a price. The temptation was a most subtle one. Jesus was conscious of his spiritual power. The 'lost ten tribes' lay not far off, a mighty host, invincible, and seeking a leader. Why should he not place himself at the head of the united Angles and Goths, restore the Hebrew nation, the House of David, and sweep over Rome to the conquest of the world? It was easy of accomplishment!

"Yet right here did Jesus show himself the greatest of human beings. Had he done this, his acquired power would have been temporal, his spirituality would have faded, and Christianity would never have been given to the world. He knew it; and in the face of it he made his tremendous sacrifice of materiality. He said: 'Get thee behind me!' and evil's most diabolical suggestion that ever came to the mind of man failed. But Jesus went to the cross for it.

"The apostle Peter seems to have addressed at least one letter to strangers who were of the tribe of Joseph, and Paul appears to have tried to go to them, although turned back. The existence of the 'lost ten tribes' seems to have been known by the more learned Jews at this time. There are many references to them throughout the New Testament. But these barbarian Angles and Getae were not yet ready for the Word, lest they rise in excess of zeal and do that which Jesus had prevented when he wrestled with and prevailed over his insidious

temptation. Josephus knew of the existence of these tribes 'beyond the Euphrates', as he put it. But Josephus was obliged to exercise the greatest caution in referring to them, for Rome was then master of the world, and the Goths were Rome's mortal enemies. In the year 86 A. D. they seriously threatened the Empire. They were beaten back, with great difficulty, and Domitian very ostentatiously called himself 'Conqueror of the Getae'. Yet he had to hire slaves for his triumphal procession in Rome, so few captives had he taken. Then Trajan conducted campaigns against the Getae and seriously defeated them and pushed them back into the wilderness. Dacia, where the Getae had dwelt, became a Roman province and was re-settled by Roman colonists—from whom the modern Roumanians are said to have descended. It was announced that the Getae were exterminated at this time.

"But a nation is not so easily obliterated, even with modern weapons of warfare. We have studied Trajan's column, which still stands in Rome, and have seen the many figures of the Getae depicted there. They are exactly similar to those of the Goths shown on the 'Storied Column' of Constantinople. Yet Trajan's campaigns greatly depleted the Getae and kept them quiet for a century. But the Getae were preparing their mighty revenge.

"And, while they prepared, the ferment of Christianity began to work among them. Jesus himself had sent them missionaries, who were bidden to go to 'the lost sheep of the House of Israel'. You may read about this in the tenth chapter of Matthew's Gospel. Peter and James wrote letters to these people. Peter is said to have been the apostle to these very tribes. The Word was come among them. Time went on. The barbarians remained quiet. Then a startling discovery was made: these Goths had received the Word, but their form of Christianity was nought but heresy, for it challenged the supremacy of the Roman pontiff, it refuted the elaborate doctrine of the Trinity!

"What had happened? This: the Gothic bishop Ulfilas had translated the Bible into the Gothic language, and the Goths had adopted the Arian heresy which regarded Jesus as a *human being.* They clearly distinguished between Jesus and the Christ; they did not regard him as God, but as a god-man. In other words, to them he was Christ-Jesus.

"Thus, while the Emperor Constantine was serving error by amalgamating Church and State, and thus striking at the Word by emasculating Christianity and rendering it mere form and ritual, a lip-service without power; while the Church at Rome, greedily grasping at temporal power, was setting up the

worship of Jesus as God; and while, because of this, the ability to heal the sick and raise the dead was rapidly becoming lost, these Goths of the House of Joseph were preserving the true concept of Christ-Jesus—a concept which, after many centuries, was to reappear among the descendants of Ephraim and Manasseh for the salvation of the world.

"And now the Goths were growing in numbers and strength, despite their incessant wars with Rome. And the Roman Empire, falsely Christian and quite outside of Principle, was decaying rapidly. While the church Fathers were frittering away their shallow souls over theological subtleties, the Goths steadily rejected the ecclesiastical supremacy of the Church of Rome and prepared to bid for the mastery of the world.

"To meet this, the Roman military center was removed from Rome to Constantinople. But Joseph, the Kingdom of Stone, had given the Kingdom of Iron, the legs of Nebuchadnezzar's dream-image, its death blow, even as it had overrun, long since, the Kingdom of Brass and burned the pagan Temple of Diana of Ephesus. To be sure, the Papacy considered the Goths heretics and enemies; and the House of Joseph did not always show itself pure and noble, particularly when it fell afoul of the Huns and yielded to their mesmerism of brute force and frightfulness. But Joseph had something vital that Rome lacked. And that vital thing was so tremendous that it was destined eventually to conquer the material world. It was Abraham's concept of the One God and the Christ.

"Rome recalled her legions from Britain—and the House of Israel, the Massagetae, moved over into the place thus vacated. The Huns came pouring into the south. Behind them came Joseph. Had the Huns been annihilated at Châlons, Joseph would then and there have become master of the world. With Attila's grip loosened by this decisive battle, Joseph fell upon the tottering Roman Empire, and in August of the year 476 A. D. brought it to an end. A few years later Theodoric the Goth was master of Italy.

"But the Roman Empire was not Joseph's destiny, and Theodoric's great kingdom was speedily ended by its adversaries, who seemed united in the one idea of crushing these stubborn enemies of the worldly Roman Church. In the year 553 the Goths quitted Italy. Their afflictions could well be attributed to the persistency with which they clung to their religion, which the Papacy condemned as damnable heresy. Yet would they not regard Jesus as other than a God-inspired man.

"Leaving Italy, Joseph went in the only direction they could go, north. For two centuries darkness appeared to settle over

them. We hear of the Goths from time to time in old ballads, and they are mentioned as serving as mercenaries in the many wars of this period. Perhaps there was good reason for their silence, for had these people revealed their identity the Church would have blazoned them forth for their heresy. Their persecutions would have begun afresh. Yet they receive mention in the earliest Norman chronicle, in A. D. 813, which states that: 'The Northmen, issuing from the island Scanzia, which is called Norway, where dwelt Goths and Huns and Dacians, attacked the Flanders coast'. The Goths had, centuries before, settled in Dacia, as you know, where the Greeks knew them as Dacians. These Normans, who begin to be prominent in the early ninth century, were the ancient Getae, the House of Joseph, the Goths, who, known as the Ostrogoths, had been forced out of Italy in the year 553.

"The Norman was not a Dane, either in appearance, customs, or manners. He was beardless, short of stature, dark of skin, cultured, and civilized. The Dane, or Viking, was large of frame, blond, with long moustaches, utterly uncultured and uncivilized. And he was no match for the Norman, who early ended the Viking piracies.

"To maintain themselves, the Normans at length submitted to baptism into the Church of Rome—yet they caused the Church endless trouble thereafter, for the old Arian heresy remained.

"Then came the fateful year 1066, when the Normans descended upon English soil and, by conquest, began their rule over their kinsmen, the Angles, Jutes, and Saxons, a rule that was to end in an amalgamation that at length gave birth to the English race. After many centuries, great vicissitudes, long wanderings, Joseph—the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh—were united to the seven other tribes. . ."

"But what had become of Dan?" queried David Barach. "You have accounted for only nine of the ten lost tribes."

"It was the tribe of Dan that left the serpent's trail," answered the girl. "This tribe seemed to have a propensity for changing the names of the places they occupied. We meet it early in the 18th chapter of Judges. They left the name of Dan everywhere. Before the captivity they occupied a small tract of land in the south of Palestine, near the coast; but Dan was not satisfied, and pushed out and acquired territory in the north, near Lebanon. Here they changed the name of the chief city, Laish, to Dan.

"When the Assyrians took the House of Israel captive they did not disturb those people of the tribes of Dan and Simeon who were dwelling on the southern coast of Palestine, but did

take with them those portions of these two tribes that dwelt in the interior, in the north and east.

"Now these people of the tribe of Dan that went into captivity and later escaped with the House of Israel north into Russia continued their old habit of leaving their name everywhere. Perhaps they were following Jeremiah's instruction to 'Set thee up waymarks'. At any rate, all through central and northern Europe we find Dan's name. It is in Dan-ube, Dan-au, Dan-tzig, the Dan, the Don, the Dan-ieper—the ancient Hebrews omitted the vowels in writing, so we have Dnieper—in U-Don, in Eri-don, and in Danes, and Dan-emerke, which is 'Dan's last resting place', or 'Dan's mark'. We find it in the Dan-ric Alps, and in Ireland in Dan's-Lough and Dan-gan castle. Why, the ancient inhabitants of Ireland were called Dan-onians. . ."

"Ireland!" exclaimed Penberry in amazement.

"We will come back to that later," said the girl, smiling. "Do you recall that I told you of a discovery made by a peasant in Denmark some 250 years ago? While plowing he turned up a golden trumpet. The authorities who examined it identified it as one of the seven golden trumpets used in the Temple at Jerusalem in the altar service. It is now in the National Museum in Copenhagen. It is ornamented with a lily and a Pomegranate. The lily, as I have told you, is the national flower of Egypt, while the pomegranate is that of Palestine. This trumpet was one of Dan's waymarks.

"Now when this portion of the tribes of Dan and Simeon went into captivity, those portions that dwelt on the southern seacoast of Palestine seem to have taken to sea in flight. They had long been a seafaring people. But now whither did they go? Well, as the first people of Ireland mentioned by history are called 'Tuatha de Danaans', meaning 'The tribe of Dan', I think we may look for them there. In the Hebrew language the word 'Dan' means 'a judge'. The prophet Daniel was a 'Judge of God'. In the Irish language 'Dunn' means the same. In Scotland there is a river Don and also a Doon, and in England there is a Don. In fact, we may unearth Dan's name all over the British isles. Wherever this tribe, or possibly the whole House of Israel, came to rest in their flight, the name Dan seems to have been left—perhaps suggestive of the river Jor-dan, that river of rest in distant Palestine, from whose banks they had been so rudely torn.

"I have said that the coastal portions of the tribe of Simeon fled by sea with a portion of the tribe of Dan. British history records that the earliest settlers in southern England and Wales were called 'Simonii', and that they came by way of the sea in the year 720 B. C. 'Simonii' is the plural form of the noun

'Simeon'. These people were pushed back into Wales by the Angles who entered England in the fifth century.

"It has been recorded that Dan sailed the sea as far back as 900 B. C. Colonists from this tribe doubtless settled in Ireland long before the captivity, thus preceding Israel to the Isles of the Sea. And from these colonists came, in time, a prince of the 'Tuatha de Danaans'. His name in the Milesian records of Ireland is given as 'Herremon'.

"And now we have followed the wanderings of the 'Lost Ten Tribes', the House of Israel, and discovered them re-united in the British isles. Truly were they called out of Egypt for a great destiny. And we find them to-day, as they were centuries ago, beating back the Assyrian in defense of the Word—a Word that they themselves do not understand as yet, but which, nevertheless, they are still preserving as if, by instinct, they knew that some day its meaning would be revealed to them."

"Wait!" interrupted David Barach. "My own people, the Jews, have they no destiny?"

Marian turned and laid a hand upon his. "Judah shall walk to Israel," she said. "The great Hebrew nation shall be reunited. The twelve tribes shall come together, for they are brethren, *all* sons of Abraham.

"Let us go back. After the great schism in 975 B. C., when the House of Israel separated from the House of Judah, the scepter remained with the House of Judah, although the House of Israel had the birthright. The scepter remained with Judah until Nebuchadnezzar overthrew the kingdom, destroyed Jerusalem, and took the last king of Judah, King Zedekiah, into captivity with his people in the year 587 B. C.

"Jeremiah had been imprisoned by King Zedekiah, but the king sent for him—as the human mind in its extremity turns to God as a last resort— and asked: 'Is there any word from the Lord?' For Nebuchadnezzar was at Jerusalem's gates. Jeremiah told the Jewish king how he might be saved; but Zedekiah, self-willed and stubborn, would not be obedient to spiritual demands. He feared ridicule. He feared loss of caste. He said to Jeremiah: 'Let no man know,' and sent him away. He dared not trust God. And so Nebuchadnezzar overcame him, carried him away into a still more material sense of existence, and put out his eyes, thus plunging him still further into the blackness of the materiality which he had refused to abandon. You may read about it in the 37th chapter of the Book of Jeremiah. But what did the captain of the guard say to Jeremiah? 'Behold, all the land is before thee.' The one who was obedient to Spirit was permitted to escape.

"By slaying all of Zedekiah's sons Nebuchadnezzar believed

that he had obliterated the royal Judaic line. But he was mistaken. If you will read the Book of Jeremiah you will note that there it is stated that to this prophet was given the mission to tear down and rebuild that royal line. Jeremiah was such a remarkable man that so great a man as the prophet Daniel even studied his prophecies. Jeremiah fled with King Zedekiah's daughters when Jerusalem fell, fled into Egypt and dwelt there in Taphanhes. One of these daughters was known by the Hebrew name 'Tea Tephi'. The Egyptian city of Taphanhes was called after her. You will remember that when we were in Egypt the Arabs took us to the site of 'The Palace of the Jew's Daughter'. This is the location of ancient Taphanhes, or Dahpnae, as it was also called. This daughter of Zedekiah was given Pharaoh's protection. She was known as 'The King's Daughter', and 'Daughter of Pharaoh'. It was this daughter who was carried in one of the ships of Dan to the distant isles of the sea. In or about the year 580 B. C. she arrived in Ireland, accompanied by her aged guardian who was called by the Hebrew name 'Ollam Folla', which means 'revealer', or 'prophet'. With them came the prophet's scribe, who is given the name 'Brug', or 'Bruch', in the Irish chronicles. Now Baruch was Jeremiah's scribe in Judea.

"The Irish chronicles also state that in the year 580 B. C. there was a King Heremon reigning there, and that he wore a crown of twelve stars. To this Heremon—who is none other than the prince of the 'Tuatha de Danaans', of whom I have spoken—Tea Tephi, daughter of King Zedekiah of the fallen House of Judah, was married. Heremon's capital city was Cathair Crofin, in what is now Ulster. After this marriage he changed the name to Tara, which is a Hebrew word and means 'law', or 'law of the two tablets'. From this union have come the kings and queens of Ireland, Scotland, and England down to the present day. The reigning king of England and head of the British Empire is a descendant of the kings of the House of Judah, and his throne is a perpetuation of the throne of David. It is to endure 'until Shiloh come'. But 'Shiloh' means 'peace', or 'rest'. So the scepter shall remain with the House of Judah until mankind become governed by Principle, God alone, when wars and their causes shall be no more and the peoples shall be united in that common brotherhood which alone can bring peace."

Again she pressed Barach's hand. "David," she said gently, "it was from your people that Jesus came. He came from the people who retain the scepter. He came to you; but you would have none of him, for your people, like the world to-day, wanted matter, not Spirit. But the tribe of Benjamin had been 'lent'

to Judah to receive the Christ. This tribe went into Babylonish captivity with the House of Judah in 587 B. C., and returned 70 years later under Ezra and Nehemiah. After their return they settled north of Jerusalem and in Galilee. Among them Jesus lived and preached, and from them he called most of his disciples and sent them forth to spread the 'good news' through the world. He told the Jews that the kingdom should be taken away from them and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof. These were to know the mysteries of the kingdom, but the Jews were not. Heavy punishment came upon the Jews for rejecting the Christ—typifying the punishment that comes upon mankind for rejecting Truth. But the tribe of Benjamin was spared. When Jerusalem was destroyed by the Romans, in A. D. 70, the tribe of Benjamin escaped, as Josephus tells us. But Benjamin could not find safety in the Roman Empire. They could only flee north and join their brethren. They appeared again in history with the Normans.

"But, David, punishment is eternal only if sin is eternal. The former will endure as long as the latter, and will cease with it. The story of the Hebrew people is the story of human civilization. Down the centuries has come the command to have but the One God, Spirit. And all the affliction that has befallen mankind is penalty for disobeying this command. Back of all material history is the spiritual, the unfoldment of the Ideas that constitute the spiritual Creation of divine Mind, God. The communal mortal mind, the suppositional opposite of Mind, counterfeits the real Creation, counterparts it. While we accept this counterfeit as the real and worship the god of matter we shall suffer and die, for matter is Baal, is Merodach, is evil, error, and can produce only its kind. The beliefs that matter has intelligence and life, that it constitutes Man, and that God who is Spirit created it, and that mere faith in Christ will cause us to rise from it after death into spiritual existence —these are the mesmeric beliefs that have wrecked nations and blinded the world to Truth. The world is in chaos to-day, but its problems will not be solved until it recognizes the Christ and demonstrates Truth by destroying disease, disaster, discord, and death, by destroying the thoughts that produce them. Error has kept the world blind by confusing Jew and Israelite and muddling Scripture; it dealt its most treacherous blow when it set forth the claim that Jesus was God. But our eyes are being opened now. These are indeed the 'last days'; the Christ *is* come; the Bible *is* proved the Word to mankind; and those who refuse to work out their salvation now and continue to follow after false shepherds are without excuse and must not complain when wars, famine, and pestilence engulf them."

Again the girl fell silent before her wondering auditors. But these had learned to respect her silence. David Barach, with the vivid remembrance before him of the awesome occurrence in the Tower of Antonia, when, from the couch where lay Alden Cragg there arose a new creature, had moved on this expedition like one in a dream. It was to him as if a veil had been rent, and he stood dumb before the revelation. The Egyptian Zuleyka, inscrutable, mysterious, seemed like a memory of ancient Pharaohs. And seldom did her deep black eyes leave the girl. Penberry, dense materialist and fiery patriot, spent his days clutching after old concepts and opinions that he had formerly believed as fixed as the Great Pyramid, but that now he saw, to his amazement and ofttimes stupefaction, blown from their foundations by the winds of God. "Damme!" he would exclaim—but only to himself when alone—"it isn't true! It . . . it's revolutionary . . . upsetting . . . Br-r-r-r!"

And yet it seemed to him that the God of Abraham had somehow drawn closer; that Enoch, Ezra, Ezekiel, Isaiah, Jeremiah, had been taken out of their setting of mysticism and had been made real to him. "Egad!" he ejaculated, "they're men, after all! Damme! they're human, *human!*" And he found himself often after that with a Bible in his lap, poring over the wanderings of the children of Israel with as much zest as he had followed the British in Flanders, as set forth by the London *Times*. "She'll make Jesus human yet, she will!" he would exclaim. "And when she does, Egad! then I want to know him." He was in ignorance of the stupendous event in Antonia's Tower, for Marian knew that his mentality was yet in swaddling clothes.

"We are going north," Marian announced to him one day, shortly after outlining the story of Israel. "We are going for further proofs and to study the traces which the Israelites left in the Crimea and elsewhere. Then we are going to the Danube; after that, again north."

"But," Penberry cried, "the war! We'll never get through! We must wait!"

"We shall start now," the girl said confidently, "and we shall get through. Fear thou not, for *I AM* is with thee; be not dismayed, for *I AM* is thy God; *I AM* will strengthen thee; yea, *I AM* will help thee; yea, *I AM* will uphold thee with the right hand of understanding."

And with their disappearance into the north the curtain again dropped upon the little band.

CHAPTER 5

THROUGH the terrible week that followed the murder in St. Jude's, the week that witnessed the sensational coroner's inquest which bound Alden Cragg over to the Grand Jury, and that closed with Harris Chaddock's impressive funeral, the rector moved as in a gray haze. Ethel lay throughout it in a stupor, her sensibilities dulled by the opiates which Doctor Roake constantly administered. Mrs. Whittier cowered in the seclusion of her chamber under the menace of a devastating fear.

Senator Chaddock, his mentality now but a remnant, was scarce capable of appreciating his son's death, and he continued stumbling and mumbling after the doctor, as had long since become his wont, or remained hovering, dull and inert, about doorstep or curb awaiting him. There were still occasional intervals, though increasingly rare, when he would abruptly awaken, with all his faculties as keenly alert as of yore; but these intervals were of brief duration. For the most part he remained sunken in vacuous stupidity, muttering incoherently and staring with unseeing eyes into emptiness. His feline adherence to the doctor was become pathetic; yet there were times when he would cease his mumbling and would fall strangely silent and stare at the doctor with knitted brows and a look of such intensity that the latter would grow nervous and apprehensive of the odd functioning within that disintegrated soul. The senator, long since incapacitated, and impoverished by the Primal Motors coup, became the doctor's charge on Harris' death; and society observed that the doctor appeared unwilling to delegate his care to others—"which shows," they said, "how the kind-hearted doctor cherishes the bond of affection that has held these two together for so many years."

The coroner's inquest was as brief as it was startling. Alden's testimony was short and unimpressive, unconvincing. He could not state positively that he had seen the pistol before, nor would he say where he had seen it, if at all. . . It was but natural that Fay Meuse should be called; but friends of the woman swore that she had been absent from the city for several days, that she had departed prior to the murder, leaving her apartment in charge of friends. And these same witnesses testified to seeing both Alden Cragg and Harris Chaddock in the Dodd apartment building—testified to hearing muffled shots and seeing these men hasten away. It was reasonable to sup-

pose that they had quarreled over the Meuse woman. . . Or that Alden had gone there to find Harris Chaddock and remonstrate with him because of his attentions to Ethel. These women had heard Fay Meuse speak of this. And Alden admitted his presence in Fay Meuse's apartment, and his encounter with Harris there, but was silent as to details.

Thus the scandal unfolded its slimy length, and the Whittier, Cragg, and Chaddock names were trodden ever more deeply into the mire. The inquest was thronged by an eager society that fed avidly on the salacious tidbits. Additional interest was furnished when the rector fainted on the stand under the awful strain. The interest increased when Madam Galuth was called. Her testimony as to Alden's character was simple and direct, but it was swallowed up in the character that society preferred and determined that he should have. Ethel's deposition was the last to be submitted—it had to be taken at her bedside, after much delay, for reference to the tragedy threw her into a nervous paroxysm that left her in a state of collapse. With Doctor Roake anxiously watching her pulse, she testified that Alden Cragg had been spying upon herself and Harris; had been waiting for them in the auditorium of the church; had accosted them at the stairway of the organ loft, behind which he had been hiding; and had shot Harris dead without warning. . .

The murder and its attendant scandal rent St. Jude's as a thunderbolt splits an oak. The church rocked with the awful shock that ripped off its veneer of piety and exposed the decay within. The rector fell crushed, but struggled to his feet to throw himself against the tottering ecclesiastical structure that swayed above him. Factions formed among the communicants and battened on the crude sensation. There were those, like the Telluses, who stanchly supported the rector against the accusation that neglect of his daughter had culminated, after a long series of hidden scandals, in this foul deed. Others there were, like the Blacks and Kerls, who held the rector directly responsible and clamored for his dismissal. Old bickerings sprang up anew and flowered into public recriminations; suppressed jealousies were vigorously fanned into open hostilities. The Blacks and the Kerls at length indignantly resigned their pews, withdrew their financial support, and took a large following with them, though the harried rector prostrated himself in their way. Despite the turmoil, the congregation increased; but only while the prospect of further sensation remained bright. When this faded, the attendance sharply fell off, and the despairing rector found himself conducting his lawdry show before a mere handful, and these with their minds

still busy with speculations on the tragic event that had stained proud St. Jude's with human blood.

And then, in due season, the Grand Jury assembled and solemnly returned an indictment against Alden Cragg for the wanton murder of Harris Chaddock.

"But Alden is surely insane," the rector tried to console himself; "he will be sent to an asylum, nothing more!"

But, though the rector felt that his relationship with Alden had long since been definitely severed; that Alden had alienated himself, on his return from the war, by his mad conduct and his unaccountable alliances; and though he felt that Alden was, beyond doubt, guilty of the shocking death of Harris Chaddock, yet he was convinced that he must continue his labors with him and assist him in the preparation of his defense. He staggered under the return of the indictment, yet he mustered his remnant of strength and visited Alden in his cell.

Alden's conduct in the face of his danger was inexplicable. "No," he said firmly, in answer to the rector's urging that he confess the crime, "I did not do it." And again he related the details of his conduct from the moment he had entered the church, in response to the rector's summons, to the death of Harris.

"But you will offer the defense of mental aberration," the rector insisted.

"You mean that I should plead insanity? No. In spite of the attempts of those who should have been my friends here—yourself included—to make me out insane, my mind is not affected. How could I plead insanity, when I acknowledge that there is but the One Mind, God, and that I reflect it? I could not perjure myself and deny my Principle to escape those who are hounding me."

"But," cried the shaking rector, "it means *death!*"

"I am not afraid to meet death," was Alden's quiet answer. "Leave me, and do not come here again with your fears and mortal suggestions. Go, rather, and ponder your own danger, for it is far greater than mine." And the rector left him, sorrowing, yet deeply perplexed.

Then fell another blow: Doctor Roake, in an interview with representatives of the press, gave it as his opinion that Alden Cragg, though possibly still suffering somewhat from shell-shock, and though exhibiting the same strange intolerance toward the established systems of religion that so many of the returned soldiers were manifesting, nevertheless was sane and quite accountable for the murder of Harris Chaddock.

The rector stood aghast before the fearful potentialities in the doctor's verdict. Why, Alden's present conduct, his refusal

to set up a plea of insanity, was proof irrefutable of a diseased brain! He threw aside his scruples and rushed to Doctor Benson.

Again his hopes met fracas. "Greatly as I wish to see Alden Cragg cleared, yet I am constrained to say that I believe him absolutely sane," was the doctor's grave pronouncement, "saner, indeed, than most of us. I cannot believe that he did the deed; yet if he did, he had full provocation."

"But if he did not do it, who did?" the rector pleaded.

Benson shook his head. "I cannot say. . . Would to God I could!" He himself had sent Fay Meuse from the city, days before the murder, to escape the persecutions of Harris Chaddock. It could not have been she. And he so informed the rector.

There was no recourse but Doctor Roake. And back to him the rector feverishly hurried. "Doctor Benson had sent Fay Meuse out of the city," he explained, and quickly gave the details of Benson's conversation. Doctor Roake heard him with marked interest, and when the rector had concluded he said: "Alden has been under a strange influence, both in Europe and here since his return. . ."

"The Galuth!"

"She will be called to the stand in his trial. She may be forced to give testimony that will aid us," the doctor assured him. "Meantime, be patient. Your most serious concern now is Ethel."

For Ethel had risen from her stupor, the ghost of her former self, aged and faded, and bearing the stamp of perpetual invalidism. Her sorrow was poignant, her mourning and lamentation pitiable. She would have taken her own life those first days, but for Doctor Roake, who remained almost constantly at her side through those dark hours. "He is interested in her," Mrs. Whittier at length observed. And she herself forthwith greatly revived—there was a toughness of fiber in Mrs. Whittier's soul that was marvelously resistant. "He's interested in her," she reported to the rector.

It was startling, but observation confirmed it. Ethel was but a gray shadow, unlovely, mirthless, silent, yet, even when she no longer required his constant ministration, the doctor was passing his scant leisure with her. . . "He is only seeking to divert her thought from herself," the rector tried to believe. But Mrs. Whittier shook her head sagaciously and affirmed the verdict of woman's instinct.

Then the rector's anger rose hot. Suspicion mingled with his fear and urged hard upon him. Thoughts of violence possessed him—he felt as he imagined Alden Cragg must have felt

when he shot down his persecutor. . . "He's keeping her alive," Mrs. Whittier declared to her protesting husband; "she'd be dead, but for him." And he groaned: "Better so!" Yet he sank back helpless, even while he felt the chains tighten. But he bitterly cursed the Penberry millions. . .

Then the assiduous doctor began to spend hours with the crushed rector, laboring to arouse him to renewed activity. "The shooting was a terrible thing," he admitted, "but it has shaken you out of a rut." And Mrs. Whittier, when she heard, revived still further and threw back her shoulders defiantly. "Let them go, the Blacks and the Kerls," she stoutly declared. "St. Jude's is better off without them. Papa will build the church bigger than ever now. Doctor Roake says so."

"Look here," the doctor urged upon the wearied rector, "after the murder your pews were filled. What did it? Sensationalism. It is sensationalism in varying degrees of strength that keeps human interest alive. Your people have had a taste of it; now they demand it. Very well, give it to them. When you again fill your pews you can fill their minds."

The rector shrank from him, yet felt his own impotence. He could not afford now, at his age, to lose his church. There was a grain of truth in the chaff of the doctor's words. "It is a sensational age, the world is full of it. Make yourself the sensational preacher of the day," the doctor insisted. "Why, the shooting is an asset; it is advertising of the best sort; you can build endless morals on it. . ."

And in a sense the doctor was right: if it was not a wholly sensational age, it was yet a mad one. The tremendous issue in France still hung trembling in the balance; the august Senate of the United States had before it a mad resolution to impose upon the American people the Angelus of the Roman Church; the nation's Chief had set apart a day for special prayer—to whom? to what? Would he also set apart a day for the youth in school to pray the principle of algebra to solve their problems? Would he appoint a day in which to ask God to be good? "We've duly warned the Lord that we're going to talk to him straight from the shoulder on that day," Ted Sayor had commented. And meantime, fear, distrust, and the love of the calves of Jeroboam stalked through the land and laughed at the noonday sirens that shrieked the announcement that the ear of the Lord was made ready to listen to his people. Ignorance of the Christ-message was rampant. Perversion of Truth had reached its ultimate.

The desperate rector yielded. He secured the dismissal of his staid assistant, Ellory Sten, and supplanted him with a young and vigorous collaborator imbued with American hustle

and Yankee methods of getting results. St. Jude's was to become known for its "stunts". Its services, its committee meetings, its institutional activities, all should become enlivened by methods that would advertise the church from coast to coast. "Abolish the long face!" the new assistant cried. "Inject the laugh into religion! Laugh and shout with Jesus! Come to our church; watch us twist the devil's tail and hear him roar!" The motion picture was pressed into service; arrangements were made for lecturers on popular subjects; and the assistant set about composing sermons for the rector on bizarre topics that must attract widespread interest. It was a renaissance; the Phœnix would indeed rise from the ashes of Harris Chaddock.

But in vain the worn rector tried to assure himself that he was justified in such a mad course. In the eyes of those upturned to him from St. Jude's pews he read a spiritual craving for wholeness that he knew would not be satisfied with ecclesiastical "stunts". In them he read the warning to Belshazzar. He was being weighed and found wanting. He was a traitor to God and the Christ, and they knew it. He was leading these lost ones in the worship of the golden calf. And in the midst of it all his anguished soul turned to Marian, and from it rose a great, longing cry. . .

And then came the trial of Alden Cragg for the killing of Harris Chaddock.

It had been expected by the Public Prosecutor that, as the murder had occurred so close to the convening of the fall term of court, the trial would be set over to the winter or spring term in order to allow the defendant ample time to prepare his defense. And Madam Galuth had brought this to Alden's consideration; but he had shaken his head and announced his readiness to go to trial at once. "If it is a trial of my faith," he said, "let it come now, for that stands firm."

"I am persuaded, Alden," she answered him, "that nothing can separate you from your God. Yet it is spiritual *understanding,* not mere faith in God, that alone will render harmless the diabolism that is directed against you. Have you that greater understanding as yet? Or shall we take the time that is offered us and prepare ourselves further?" Her thought dwelt on the zeal that Marian had long before permitted to use her to force Alden into the war. And she counseled wisdom. "The ways of error are subtle," she said; "it constantly assumes new forms, new methods, in its opposition to the Word. The forces against you are humanly powerful and deeply hidden. Their springs may be traced back through many years."

"And is it your thought that we should wait?" he asked.

She answered in the affirmative. But again he shook his head. "I will meet them now," he said. "I am not afraid."

As the date of the trial drew near, interest in it increased. In a way the members of the Roake organization felt it their duty to push the case against Alden. The tragic death of Doctor Harris Chaddock had been heralded throughout the country and tremendous sympathy had been aroused for the victim. The funeral had been delayed to permit the attendance of as many members as possible, and these had walked, bare of head, behind the hearse, a great, solemn concourse that profoundly impressed the community and those in the country at large who eagerly scanned the lurid illustrations of the event that appeared in all newspapers and in the various weekly news serials on the screen. "It's propaganda!" Doctor Benson declared. And Ted Sayor, as he watched, fascinated, the long funeral train drag slowly beneath the windows of Doctor Roake's offices, felt a great sinking at his heart. "Alden's done for!" he muttered. "His religion didn't save him. It couldn't. He came to me with a sanctimonious face and a mouthful of Bible verses, then went out and killed Harris Chaddock. . . He's a hypocrite! A murderer! He deceived me, just as everybody else has! . . . But he should be awarded a medal for killing Chaddock!" . . .

For weeks the rector, with horrified gaze, had watched the day drawing nearer. The awful thought kept recurring to him that Doctor Roake had refrained heretofore from haling Alden before a lunacy commission *just for this!* Had Alden been duly declared insane, he could not have become involved in this dreadful tragedy. The thought tore through his terrified soul that Doctor Roake *wanted* Alden's death! But why? He knew not; but this he did know: Doctor Roake ruled, or he ruined. And he had not ruled Alden Cragg since his return from the war.

The perspiration stood out upon the rector's forehead. He himself had been ruled—and ruined! And now Ethel. . . He gasped at thought of the doctor's attentions to her. Blackness came before him, and he fled wildly from the revolting product of his own mental looms.

But whithersoever he fled he brought up against Doctor Roake. He was now at work in the Roake offices and under the doctor's constant direction. He had at last been established there with a definite number of hours a week devoted to the matter of enlisting and holding the sympathy of the ministers throughout the country in the Roake plan. He was definitely made the head of the ecclesiastical department—if he might so denominate it—as Roake was chief of the medical.

And daily he met the disintegrating senator; daily, often hourly, he heard the bent, decrepit figure come shuffling down the corridors—mumbling, always mumbling; often he found him asleep at the doctor's elbow; often he saw him on the curb before the doctor's residence, waiting, as a dog would wait, for his master's appearance. And the sight always struck sickening terror to the rector's tortured soul.

Often, too, he met Ted Sayor. And as often he marveled anew at the young man's shockingly altered appearance. Ted was duly employed by Doctor Roake now; yet how it had been brought about, knowing, as the rector did, Ted's former radical opposition to the doctor's methods and views, was an enigma that was as terrifying as it was inexplicable. But why not? For the Primal Motor coup had stripped Ted bare . . . and the doctor was, even on Ted's admission, very kind to him.

Withal, the rector's days were become a nightmare; his nights, a hell. And often now as he tossed in sleeplessness came the horrible suggestion that he take his own life—for flee he could not, escape by other route was there none.

And yet, as he analyzed his thought, of what was he afraid? Doctor Roake was an acknowledged type of the perfect gentleman; suave, urbane, courtly, soft-spoken, gentle of manner, he was kindness itself, consideration personified. He was an exemplary citizen. He stood at the head of his profession. He was famed for his interest in the public weal. And his now famous plan was the epitome of practical public benefaction. Not a word of reproach could justly be uttered against his conduct of life, a life sacrificed, as all knew, to the welfare of his fellow men. . .

The driven rector betook himself again to Doctor Benson—Benson was not a member of the Roake organization, he had learned. "For God's sake, Doctor," he cried, throwing himself into a chair before the startled man, "what can we do?"

The doctor stared at the rector in amazement. "What do you mean?" he asked. "To save young Cragg? But can we prove that he did not kill Harris Chaddock?"

"No, no, no! But . . . have you any influence? Come and talk with . . ."

The doctor's eyes opened wider, and his brows went up. "With Doctor Roake?" he asked. "But what has Roake to do with the case? Besides, I have no influence with him. I am not in his organization. I am no longer even a physician."

"What?" gasped the rector.

The doctor shook his head. "My license has been revoked for unethical conduct. I told Fay Meuse to leave the city to escape medical persecution, and that's what it cost me. Better not have anything to do with me." And he laughed grimly.

It was with such varied preliminaries that the trial of Alden Cragg was ushered in.

It was regularly conducted, but the young lawyer into whose charge Alden had placed his case obviously worked at a great disadvantage. His client would say but little on the stand, would afford no indication of insanity, and constantly left openings through which the prosecution could not but drive home damaging points. The testimony of Madam Galuth, to the immense disappointment of the rector, afforded no support. His own was unwittingly condemnatory, but the poor man was scarce aware of what he was saying. It was clearly established that Alden and Harris had violently quarreled over Ethel; it came out through Ted Sayor that Alden had attacked Harris in the little hotel where Ted roomed; it was revealed that Alden had threatened Harris in Florida—both the rector and Ethel afforded this testimony; and then Alden himself admitted that he had told Harris that Ethel would never become his wife. "So what can you do, gentlemen?" the prosecutor demanded, as he summed up the case before the jury. And they answered him by a prompt verdict of "Guilty", and fixed the punishment at death.

Alden heard it scarce comprehending. He had been certain of his ability to meet this shaft of evil and turn it. And he wondered dully as he was led away if the Nazarene on the cross had been certain that he could meet death, and, doubting, had cried out in sudden fear lest his power to do so should fail.

CHAPTER 6

A LIFE had been illegally taken; restitution could be made—so the jury had avowed—only by legally taking another. If one thrust his neighbor into a new state of consciousness, he must himself be thrust after him, however unprepared. To sweep the dirt out of sight under the table is to get rid of it. Or, commercially, if you desire the life of your enemy it may be purchased by your own. Thus is crime easily handled. The Church in Tetzel's day turned it into a prosperous trade: for the killing of a layman by a layman the penalty was 5 gr., the equivalent of less than a week's keep of a man and his horse. In the subsequent centuries the elements of human nature have remained remarkably constant.

It is true that Alden Cragg had been convicted on very circumstantial evidence. The judge recognized this when he set the day for the hearing of arguments for a new trial. And this

aroused fresh hope within the rector and Doctor Benson and the scant handful who sympathized with Alden and disapproved the harsh verdict.

But these hopes were doomed. The defense could produce no additional evidence of Alden's innocence, nor did it succeed in establishing its contention of errors in the conduct of the trial. Upon the evidence submitted in what was generally acknowledged to have been an impartial trial, it had been almost conclusively established that Harris had fallen by Alden's hand. The jury was justified in straining a point in its finding; and the judge set aside the motion and, with brimming eyes, named a day in February when Alden should pay eye for eye and tooth for tooth—nay, rather, when he should pay the penalty for humanity's many centuries of stubborn refusal to obey the God of Israel and prove the nothingness of death by demonstrating Life eternal.

Strange perversion, that mankind should rather prefer to traffic in pelts and tallow than undertake the infinitely more profitable task of demonstrating Israel! Yet were there some who were lifting their heads through the thick materiality of the twentieth century. Doctor Rowley was one who was straining above the mire of matter. He had been awaiting the summons which Alden had promised him. But he was appalled now at the circumstances under which it had come.

"It is not possible that one who did what Alden Cragg did here in my presence should have committed this crime!" he kept repeating. And he voiced the sentiment to Alden when, arrived in Crestelridge, he again saw the condemned man, now behind bars of steel in the thick-walled keep.

And Alden smiled. "You were convinced by what you saw," he said. "I tried to convince my fellow men here by preaching to them. They would not permit me to do any works. Perhaps it is meant that I shall convince them only by meeting death in the chair. If so, I am glad."

Doctor Rowley stared at him dumfounded. Surely that was not the expression of a sound mind! And if not, then the man had been unjustly condemned. "What can I do for you?" he asked, though he had already secretly determined to leave no stone unturned in his efforts to save Alden.

"For me, nothing," Alden replied; "but for humanity, much. Go, see Madam Galuth. She will tell you what to do." And Doctor Rowley went away sorely perplexed.

But Alden's conduct in Florida had been eminently sane, he reflected. He felt that if he should explain it to Doctor Roake, that prominent and powerful influence might be elicited toward the re-opening of the case.

And, quite beyond his expectations, he found Doctor Roake immensely interested and charmingly gracious. And the sympathetic atmosphere which the doctor threw about him proved so seductive that he was unconsciously constrained to go much farther into details than he had intended.

For Doctor Roake had long wished to know just what it was that Alden did in Florida, and he rejoiced now over this fortuitous opportunity to learn it. He leaned far forward to catch every word; he exerted his every mental force to hold his informant; and when Doctor Rowley left he sat back in his easy chair and smiled and nodded his head as he watched the blue smoke from his cigar drift upward. "Remarkable!" he at length exclaimed aloud. "The boy makes nothing of death and is willing to risk the test! It will confirm my theories, or utterly refute them! It will be the greatest contribution of the age to science!" Then, after a long pause: "He got it all from Marian. *That* much, at least, happened over there. I'll know the rest some day. And I'll learn it from her own lips, here, for Alden's predicament will bring her back—if she's still alive." And as he lay back and lost himself in his meditations there drifted to his ears the mumble, mumble, mumble of the disintegrated soul that came shuffling down the hallway and halted at his door.

The passing of the sentence of death upon Alden Cragg cast a spell of awe over Crestelridge. The alert assistant rector of St. Jude's seized upon it to compose a startlingly sensational sermon for the following Sunday; but the rector cast it into the waste basket and dropped his head upon his desk and sobbed in his awful wretchedness. Ethel and her mother drew together and huddled in shadowy corners in fearful anticipation. Society for once fell silent and contemplative. The winds of desolation were blowing strong over Crestelridge, and the people shivered and drew their tinseled rags closer. . .

Doctor Rowley, awakened by his meeting with Madam Galuth, bowed his head in humiliation and sorrow. And to Doctor Benson, to whom she afterward sent him, he opened his heart. "I was mesmerized when I sat before Roake!" he exclaimed. "Else why on earth should I have told him what Alden did in Florida?"

And Doctor Benson grunted his deep disgust. "If there was any hope before, it is gone now," he growled. "Don't you see that if Alden lives he will be the greatest menace to Roake's plan that there possibly could be? If Roake is to endure, and all he stands for, then Alden must go. And others must follow—as some have preceded. Oh, I'm not in a position to give testimony," as Doctor Rowley looked up startled; "I only sur-

mise. If Marian Whittier were here . . . But she isn't, and there's no use speculating. Alden will go to his death. . ."

"He made a strange statement about being glad to meet death, to make the test. . ."

"Bah! Jesus Christ may have done it—but I doubt even that. Great psychologists, when about to die, have promised their friends they would communicate with them after death. What did it ever amount to? Bah! We've all got to die; and when we're dead we're *dead,* and that's all there is to it! Alden's doomed! But so are we all, even Roake—and there's some comfort in that."

Slowly, irresistibly, the darkness was gathering. On the battlefields of Europe shells and human voices shrieked in a unison of despair; sobs and groans rose and mingled with the drizzling rain that dripped from the dun, unpitying clouds; cries, wild and hideous, went up to the unknown God to cure and to curse; and human lives were blown hither and yon like chaff in the wind. Men's thoughts were being established—the promise was indeed kept!—but their thoughts were those only that externalize death.

"Roake's 'health-council' is going to materialize, I guess," glumly remarked Doctor Benson one day, looking up as Doctor Rowley entered the office. "Seen the papers?" He tossed the *Courier* across the table. "Instead of having it held in Washington he's going to hold it here. He calls it a convention. It's primarily for the members of the organization to get together and discuss ways and means, but all doctors and clergymen are invited to some of the sessions. I'm barred from the regular sessions, no longer being a licensed physician; but you can go."

"I expect to attend," said Doctor Rowley, seating himself and scanning the news item.

"The organization is going to adopt a permanent name," Benson continued. "Then they are going to take steps to absorb all the big medical associations in the country, national, state, and county. Whether they can gulp them all down remains to be seen. But I think they will. Allopathic, homeopathic, chiropractic, eclectic, osteopathic—they'll all become Roakopathic. Then look out! They'll have every congressman and legislator on the tapis before them, and they'll pass laws that will make Russia seem like the Garden of Eden! It will be the complete triumph of political medicine and religion—damned, unholy wedlock! This convention is nothing but a show of strength to those who are holding out against the Roake plan and opposing it, like myself. Whittier is heading the clergymen—God forgive him! But this is only preliminary. The real aim of

the Roake plan is the creating of a National Department of Health, with a Cabinet officer. . . I say, Rowley, when that's done we will walk a narrower plank than the one we're walking now, eh?"

He leaned over his table and extracted a letter from a drawer. "Look at this," he said, holding it out. "I wrote a pamphlet on the therapeutic influence of the mind in the treatment of disease. I advertised it in certain eastern magazines. That is, the advertisements appeared once, and once only. After that I received such letters as this from the magazine publishers, stating that they refused to accept further advertising of the pamphlet on account of the serious objections of the many thousands of regular physicians who advertised with them. Humph!

"Then what?" he went on excitedly. "They got my license! Who? Roake! And did he stop there? Not much! Every few days a visiting nurse enters my home. . . Can I keep her out? No! The law is back of her. What is she there for? She says she is sent to look for contagion. Bosh! She is spying for Roake, and don't you forget it! . . . He's got the women all over the country hypnotized into working for his plan. He'll have a swarm of them here at his damnable convention. . ."

"The holding of this convention should be prevented," declared Doctor Rowley. "It will scatter the seeds of sickness and death all over the country."

"Prevented?" guffawed Benson. "Agreed! But no *earthly* power will prevent it! God alone can stop it! I . . . By the way, in your talks with young Cragg in Florida did he ever speak of error killing itself?"

"By overreaching, yes."

"Well, the suicide of error is all that will stop the holding of this convention," was Benson's conclusion.

For a moment Doctor Rowley sat in thought. Then he looked up. "That reminds me of what Madam Galuth said this morning. A great fear has entered men's hearts—why, it was fear that caused the war! And that fear is externalized in many ways." He leaned toward Benson. "Has it occurred to you that Roake is hurrying this convention because of fear?"

"Fear of what?" Benson demanded.

"The so-called Spanish influenza."

"The influ . . ."

"Yes; it is becoming epidemic, and the doctors can't meet it," was the reply.

CHAPTER 7

OUT of the east it came, riding the winds. So came the Huns, the "Scourge of God"; so came the Moslem Antichrist. Before it rolled the gaseous barrage of deadly fear that killed ere the scourge itself arrived.

It had raised its Medusan head in Spain, in May. A month later it scaled the chalk cliffs of Britain. By August it was in Boston, with tentacles in distant India, Iceland, and the South Sea Isles. From mid-September to Christ's natal day its withering breath had shriveled the lives of 350,000 people in the United States alone. Ere it slunk back into its fens 6,000,000 human corpses comprised its toll.

The doctors labeled it "Spanish influenza". The name was felicitous. Spain had remained neutral when the Assyrian threw himself upon Israel and error launched its twentieth-century "drive" against the Word. Spain was the one child that throughout the ages had remained loyal to the Roman Church; yet Spain now held the grinning mask of hypocrisy before her face and extended the right hand of fellowship to the Hohenzollerns. The Spanish "influence" was in essence Prussian.

It was the Prussian scientific "influence" that throttled a religiously mesmerized Spain. It was in the land of Franz Mesmer that most of the modern theories of disease and their material treatment had found origin and come to fullest flower. It was in Germany that uniformity of medical treatment was enforced to the greatest extent, and propaganda for compulsory health insurance most highly elaborated. It was the chemical compounds developed in German laboratories that were always first to find favor in a world credulous of the belief of life in matter. In this latest "drive" of Mesmer's "influence" Germany furnished the virus; Spain, the ready channel; the world, the receptive victim.

Carefully had the soil of human thought been prepared. The collapse of Russia had created a terpsichorean void that could be most readily filled by the Spanish dance; the decadence of Austria had left the boards bare of Viennese salacity, and the Spanish opera was most available to supply the lack; "German fried" and "Hassenpfeffer" were patriotically swept from the trencher, and piquant Spanish dishes then ceased to be novelties. The press was ready: popular interest in the closing scenes of the great war was waning, yet the people's demand for sensation was unabated. The cantonments of the

American army were full. *Materia medica* was dominant. The Church was impotent; God was unreal. Killing was authorized by religious and civil authority. Death accepted the obeisance of the human mind and stretched forth its black scepter.

It was the mysteriousness of the contagion that struck terror into the minds of the populace. Isolation was no barrier: the plague's leering face appeared simultaneously above the lush grass of wave-washed tropic isles and the frozen fjords of Scandinavia. Ships far out at sea, having had no contact with land or other vessels for months, developed the disease. "It's due to the dust of human bodies blown to atoms by the monster shells!" cried men of science. And at their words nausea seized upon the people and sickened their souls. Confusing and contradictory theories sprang up, yet would the human mind not give over its obsession that the disease was diffused by material "germs". "It was sent by God!" moaned the orthodox. "A visitation for our sins!" And they sought to discover the specific peccancies which had thus drawn down the divine wrath.

But if a punishment from God, why 17,000 deaths in the American army that was assembling to defend the Word? Why the closed doors of the houses of God? Why should the country districts, rather than the great cities of vice, be most sorely smitten? And why, in particular, mothers with unborn babes?

By rapid-fire budding the fear-germ multiplied. The contagion quickly became pandemic. Though still called "Influenza", it was seen to differ widely from former epidemics of so-called "Grippe". Its virulence more nearly resembled that of the "Black Death". Its diffusibility was extreme. In a few weeks the extinction of the human race was threatened. Error indeed appeared to have entered upon self-destruction.

Crestelridge, whose favored ones had not ceased heretofore to grope through the rubbish heaps of matter for increase of worldly goods and stimulus to material sensation, now looked out upon the harvest of death and went suddenly mad with fear. The foolhardy steps of the Telluses, Blacks, and Kerls, which to-day led them into a reckless sense of material plenty and to-morrow would plunge their souls into the pit of penury, were abruptly halted. Then they went scurrying to the doctors' doors, pelted by mental suggestions with the stings of scorpions. These terrified ones had no idea of bringing their thoughts into captivity to Christ. Oh, yes, they had listened to the perfunctory reading of that Scriptural passage many times. But the rector had not shown that he knew what it meant, and they could not be expected to exceed him in sacred

wisdom. And they left the doctors' offices with bags on their noses!

Among the men of science divisions soon arose. The "influenza germ" was declared by some to be so tiny as to be undiscernible under the most powerful glass; others proceeded to describe it with minute particularity. The sincere investigators stared at one another blankly. "In the face of the most appalling crisis the world has ever known, we physicians are helpless!" cried Doctor Rowley. Such pronouncements but fanned the flames of panic. The morale of the community sank under them, nor was raised by the infliction of masks and the barring of church doors. "God forgive me if I ever again prate of the wonderful achievements of medicine!" groaned Doctor Sale in despair, as he stood at the bedside of death. And the sentiment was echoed by honest physicians from ocean to ocean.

"What now will Roake do?" muttered Doctor Benson through his set teeth.

"What is Whittier doing?" asked Doctor Rowley. "What now is his unscientific Christianity worth?"

"Kerl is making capital of the epidemic," announced Doctor Lann. "He has put out a sure-cure for Spanish influenza, called 'Kerlite'. He'll make a million."

But even as he spoke, the great Kerl mansion was torn open by Death, who stalked to the chamber where lay the worldly medicine-maker's only son and placed his mark on the lad's damp brow. "God's sake, man!" cried the frenzied millionaire, "can't you save him?" And Doctor Roake grit his teeth and turned away. The dire prophecy of "Woe upon those that laugh!" had fallen upon the grinning Freddy Kerl, whose chase after the baubles of vanity and folly had thus miserably ended.

The hissing swish of Death's scythe was heard on every hand. The hallucinations of the frivolous élite of Crestelridge consumed apace. Madeline Nence was cut down before the unbelieving eyes of her doting parents and in the presence of Doctor Roake. Wallie Black, once aggressively boastful of his physical strength, hovered, day after day, in pitiable weakness and mental terror, and then gave up. "They're dying like flies!" cried Doctor Benson, aghast.

In the midst of the flurry and confusion in the offices of Doctor Roake Ted Sayor sat and laughed. "It's a game!" he exclaimed under his breath. "It's a game of 'Germ, germ, who's got the germ?' Oh, it's a wise little bug, this influenza germ! It can't be seen with the finest microscope, and it can't be weighed or measured. It lives in churches and theaters, but avoids the restaurants. It rides around in street cars and

taxis, but not in steam cars nor on the doctor's clothes. You'll find it in barber shops, but never in dental parlors, and never, no never on the streets! It goes through glazed jars and the densest cement filters, yet it is so huge that it can't get through the big meshes of a gauze nose-mask! *Some* germ! Chase it, Roake, chase it! You'll catch it if you put salt on its tail! . . ."

In this season of taut nerves, of soul-agitation, suspicion, and paralyzing fear, the public was in no mood to be impressed by Doctor Roake's convention, and none realized it more keenly than the doctor himself. From his offices the announcement went forth postponing the proposed assembly. Then Doctor Roake turned swiftly and, through the local Board of Health, seized Crestelridge by the throat. There were other ways to demonstrate his power! The wavering sentiment in regard to closing the churches was quickly crystallized, and their doors were forthwith definitely sealed. If the people did not believe in the efficacy of prayer when in health, they certainly could not when ill. Besides, the Christian ministers had heretofore shown that they conceded far more power to drugs than to God. "But should not the stores be closed as well?" one asked. Foolish question! The stores were necessary to the general welfare—the churches had proved themselves non-essentials. It was but the fulfillment of the prophecy that as ye sow ye shall reap. They had sown a sterile seed.

The "destruction that wasteth at noonday" went swiftly on. The newspapers published the long death-lists on their front pages and spread the terror broadcast by making it a daily feature. Panic-stricken people in the first stages of the malady refused to go to bed, lest they should not rise again. These people who had been observing the nation's special day for prayer now saw their shallow faith evaporate, and sank quivering before the Frankenstein of their own fears. The quarantine and the mask were fully demonstrated and proved absurdly unavailing. In remote districts of the country where no cases had yet appeared rigid quarantines were established. "We'll watch those places," Doctor Benson told Rowley. Presently the epidemic broke out in them, dropped, seemingly, from the clouds. Immediately mask ordinances were strictly enforced. Later those districts were reporting a larger proportional number of cases and deaths than any other portions of the country. "You see?" said Benson. "The nose-bag is an insult to God—yet the ministers wear 'em and support the doctors in their demand that they shall be inflicted upon us wholesale! Do you wonder the world's at war?"

At the beginning of the outbreak the Reverend Wilson Whittier raised his eyes from the intensive contemplation of his own

sorrows and threw himself into the service of his fellows. As he worked, he prayed. But his fervent prayers were met with alarming increases in the wastage of human life. He prayed for the recovery of Freddy Kerl, even though the Kerls no longer recognized St. Jude's nor its rector, and he shed bitter tears when the young man's life flickered out. The quick death of Madeline Nence greatly shocked him—she died even while he was on his knees at her bedside! And as he stood by her bier in the conduct of the last rites his voice broke and he leaned over the casket and sobbed aloud. When Wallie Black died he would have gone to the stricken home, but that he knew that they held him guilty of negligence of his own daughter and in that respect responsible for the death of Harris Chaddock. One by one his parishioners fell ill. Funerals became daily demands. "Alas! why should Crestelridge be so sorely smitten?" he cried aloud. "My God, why hast Thou thus afflicted us?"

The closing of his church had in the early days of the pandemic appeared to him expedient. Likewise the closing of the schools and places of amusement. The masks were advisable . . . "Anything that promises help in this awful crisis!" he declared. The mild forms of quarantine seemed to him judicious measures, and he lent them his hearty coöperation. When the injection of serums was advocated, he acquiesced. The doctors knew best. They were men of science; he was but a humble preacher of the Word. . .

But the doctors went freely from house to house; likewise the health officials. Were they incapable of disseminating the influenza germ? The health officer who posted the quarantine placard upon the Nence mansion had gone from thence to mingle with a huge concourse at a ball game. Was he less likely to spread the contagion than the girl's family? The rector wondered. He could not know that the human mind was again involved in the age-old error of mistaking effect for cause, so deeply was he himself mesmerized. He of course did not believe that ills were caused by demons entering the body, and that such demons were to be exorcised by incantations and magic, but he did believe thoroughly in the germ theory, and held that the microbes of disease were to be removed by medication. Where God entered the problem he knew not.

But in the face of the utter failure of such skilled physicians as Doctor Roake the rector's thinking became confused. Again and again his thought turned to Marian, and again and again he would seclude himself in his study and strive to recall the things she had said to him touching these very points. And thus, while his days were spent hurrying in dread anticipation

to the bedsides of the dying, or reading amid bitter tears the burial service over victims of the great epidemic of hypnotic fear, he found some measure of consolation in keeping Marian in mind, as if the mere thought of her were a sustaining power in those black hours of human desolation.

CHAPTER 8

DOCTOR ROWLEY did not immediately return to Florida, as he had expected. When Madam Galuth voiced to him the thought that had come to her, namely, that he should remain to take over the practice which Doctor Benson had been obliged to relinquish by reason of losing his license, he acted upon it at once. "There is more behind Madam Galuth's idea than she has told," he explained to Doctor Benson. "I am sure it has to do with Alden Cragg and Doctor Roake. At any rate, I shall instruct my assistant in Florida to handle my practice there until such time as I can return. Meantime, I am at Madam Galuth's service."

"A remarkable woman!" Benson observed. "I think she is marshaling her cohorts. But will she herself lead them? I rather think not. . . No, I think not. . . Rowley," turning and laying a hand on the other's arm, "in spite of the horrible condition that the world is in, I would rather be alive to-day than at any other time in history."

Horrible, indeed, from the human standpoint, was the world's condition. For it was a world afraid. The worship of Jeroboam's calves, the burning of joss sticks, the human offerings to Moloch, the sacrifices beneath Juggernaut's wheels, even the gulping of the chemist's potions, and the wearing of red flannel over the bowels had one and all mocked men's credulity, and left the sense of a malevolent power, mightier than God and with which mortals are doomed forever to struggle, more terrible than ever.

The rapid development of the pandemic of Spanish influenza was like the work of the thief in the night. Ere the goodman was aware, his house was despoiled. Few saw it as propaganda; few realized how completely a sensation-loving press, ignorantly serving a sensation-loving populace, had lent itself to the most subtle artifices of horrification and spread death broadcast by scattering the prolific seeds of hypnotic fear. In this fell work it coöperated unwittingly with ignorant health officials and frightened doctors, whose terrifying rules of quarantine, whose absurd masks, whose placards, solemn warnings,

and awesome medical talks gave seeming life and power to a senseless myth and caused millions to slay themselves with their own false thinking. The awful havoc wrought among the American soldiers was error's freshly camouflaged drive against the Word; the great destruction throughout the world, intended to paralyze thought, was a warning mightier than the thundered prophecies of the Hebrew seers. . . "If this virulence is prolonged, or if it should be maintained in future visitations," exclaimed Doctor Benson, "what in God's name will happen to the human race?"

To advise the stricken people not to get excited, to "keep cool", and to "call a physician on the first appearance of symptoms", was like springing up in a crowded auditorium and yelling "Fire!" and following it with the admonition: "Be not afraid." To instill, through press and placard, the virus of fear into human thought and then seek to allay it with a specious word of calm was nothing less than serving error through its most subtle mode.

"In the first place," Doctor Benson observed to his co-laborer Rowley, "the disease starts as a cold. Then fear seizes the victim, and naturally a fever develops. This increases the fear and diminishes bodily resistance. The patient is then ready for pneumonia. Oh, I grant you, the pneumonia differs in many respects from that with which we have been so familiar. But I say this difference is due to nothing but the horrible fear. Then come the experiments of the doctor—and these and the fear finish the work. We're ready then for the undertaker."

"And the undertaker," Doctor Rowley remarked grimly, "is reaping a harvest. He has boosted his rates, I notice. That fellow across the way told me that he expected to clear not less than $25,000 from this epidemic. Cheerful, eh?"

"It's cannibalism!" cried Benson.

But likewise had the doctors advanced their fees. Doctor Roake had suggested the adoption of a new schedule, under which a call was rated from $15 upward. Night calls might be anything above $25. A general increase of 150 per cent was suggested for all medical work and widely adopted. With the cost of living increasing by leaps and bounds, and the cost of dying now become almost prohibitive, terrified mortals were caught between Scylla and Charybdis and sank into a state of hopelessness.

"It's an outrage!" declared Benson. "But the whole system of medical practice is a relic of barbarism! It belongs to the ape-age! And the raising of fees now is sheer cannibalism! Thank God there are some doctors who realize it!"

"There are some of us," Doctor Rowley said, "who have

acquired sufficient knowledge to know how little we really do know. I have often questioned whether anyone was ever really cured by a doctor. I am beginning to believe that the only influence a doctor can exert is a mental one. If he is cheerful and creates an atmosphere of optimism, and meantime keeps out of the way and permits Nature to do the work, the patient will generally recover. I have done my share of killing; now I stand aside and let my patients alone. Or at best, I merely entertain them while they are getting well. I have no influenza patients to-day: I have many who are in bed with ordinary colds, and many more who are in bed with the fear that they are going to have a cold and subsequent influenza. In this experimental stage of the physician's efforts I see a wonderful opportunity for the clergy; *they* ought to have something to fall back on; we doctors haven't. Therapeutics is not an art, but a confusion, and while we doctors are tossing on the sea of perplexity I should think the ministers of the Gospel would see that true Christianity is really a science. . ."

"Bosh!" grunted Benson, nor followed up this—to him—all-sufficient reply.

Ceaselessly the wheel turned: the great and the small dropped alike into the hopper of death. "Keep cool and confident," the ubiquitous placards admonished. Aye, if you know what that means. Keep your thought cleansed of materialism, and be confident in the omnipotence and consideration of the One Mind. For that is both scriptural and scientific. Plagues must needs come till this is learned. While Pharaoh is still dominant in the Egypt of materialism, while mankind yet long for the fleshpots of unlicensed indulgence of the material senses, while they are mesmerized into unwillingness to know God aright and apply that knowledge in the demonstration of Israel, plague after plague must come as self-imposed agony for straining after ease in matter and the gratification of material lusts. There have been pandemics throughout history; that they have not been more prevalent in modern times has been attributed to sanitation and improved systems of hygiene. Yet in the most materially sanitary and hygienic of all eras, the twentieth century, has occurred a virulent scourge whose devastation has been nigh incredible. For effective sanitation, be it known, is of the thought, and true hygiene is the putting off of the material concept. Real medication is the application of Principle to men's problems—yet, alas! these things are not taught in our schools, and our curricula are still stuffed with a false lore that would hold Life deeply embedded in dead matter. While this obtains, recurrent plagues must needs sweep the earth.

When the agitation was at its height in Crestelridge—

where doubtless the madness of fear raged as nowhere else—Ted Sayor, recovering from a wracking fit of coughing that had stained his handkerchief crimson, rose unsteadily from his chair and, with frequent furtive glances behind him, stole slowly out of the Roake offices and softly closed the door, never again to return. "I'm done for anyway!" he muttered as he crept down the hallway. "I had hoped the 'flu' would take me—but it won't, just because I'm not afraid of it! I'm done for, but I'm through with Roake! He got me—but I'm *through!* Let him set the authorities after me! I'll not die in prison now!" His excited thought found voice in low exclamations until he reached the elevator. "I'm a slacker . . . yes, I'm a slacker. Boots said it: I'm a skunk! And Roake got me for it . . . got my life! But I'll fool the vulture: he'll not get my body to peck at on the dissection table!" And the red spots in his cheeks glowed under the stimulus of his mild delirium as he mingled with the crowd in the street.

In his study in the rectory the Reverend Wilson Whittier paced back and forth in an effort to maintain control of himself. The terrific strain of the past weeks was telling: he felt himself going to pieces. His tottering church had not reacted to the stimulating "stunts" of his new assistant; his parishioners were steadily falling before the invisible "influence" that had come among them with a medical label; human power had been tested to the utmost, and had broken; medicine, rankly material and impotent, dominated a religion equally materialistic and more impotent. . . The rector knew it—knew, too, that it was blazoned to the hopeless public from the signboard nailed to St. Jude's doors: *Closed on account of the epidemic.*

The cold November rains were falling. Could they but drown the memory of these past weeks of hell, he might wish that they would descend in a flood. He had just returned from the death-bed of a young girl. She had been a favorite in his church; she had stood loyally by him during St. Jude's testing time; and he loved her as a daughter. He had often wished that Ethel might have manifested such innocence, such purity, such devotion to the things of God. Surely such a one must be under the divine protection. . .

Yet had she withered like a frail flower in a wintry blast. He had rushed to her bedside with the comforts of religion, had thrown himself on his knees and poured out his soul in pleadings with the Almighty. She had feebly stretched out her arms to him in her helpless appeal. Had he no message from the Lord in times like these? He had tried, as he saw her sinking, to recall the thoughts that Marian had so often voiced, but that had fallen upon dull ears. God above! he would have given his life if . . . if . . .

Then he had thought of Madam Galuth. Did he dare go to her? Did he dare ask her what it was that Marian had said? Did he dare lay down his age-honored orthodoxy at this outcast woman's feet and beg that with her heresy she would come and try to save this child? It would cost him his church; it would bring upon him the anger of Doctor Roake. . . "Can you suggest anything?" the weeping mother of the dying girl had asked brokenly. "The doctors have given her up. . ."

Again his thought had flown to Madam Galuth. Why always to her? Why? *Why?* Was it the temptation of Satan? Might not disease be a divine minister? . . . Was not this pure child entering now a better world, eternal life? Was it not better to die in the holy faith than live by such mesmeric suggestion as the Galuth undoubtedly exerted? And Doctor Roake . . .

He shook his head in answer to the frenzied mother's pleading cry. That night the young life went out.

And now he regarded himself as a murderer. . . Not that Madam Galuth's ministrations had been certain to save the girl; but he had deliberately refused to employ every human means to defeat death. . . He was a wanton murderer! The piteous cries of the stricken mother would forever ring in his ears! . . . He should never cease to hear them! . . . In the dead face of the child which he could never forget he had read his own condemnation!

He threw himself upon his desk in an agony of tears and sobbed long and violently in his deep misery. When the paroxysm passed, he rose unsteadily and prepared himself for the street. His face was ashen; his teeth were set; there was a wild look in his eyes. An hour later he sat before Doctor Roake in the latter's private sanctum.

"I have spoken to you before," he said hoarsely, "about Madam Galuth. Has she the legal right to . . . to . . . attempt to heal the sick?"

The doctor regarded the rector oddly. "Do you know that she is practicing the healing arts?" he asked. There was only the faintest indication of a smile about his mouth.

"I have been informed," the rector replied, "that she has handled cases of the influenza."

"With success?" the doctor queried interestedly.

"I . . . I have not heard that she has . . . lost any cases," the rector answered hesitatingly. "But she disregards the rules of quarantine, I am positive. Under the Wess law she is therefore . . . liable, is she not?"

"Yes."

"Then why don't they arrest her?" the rector cried excitedly.

"Well, in this crisis . . ." the doctor began, then paused to observe the rector. "We doctors have been reluctant to strictly enforce drastic . . ."

"The law *must* be enforced!" the rector declared loudly. He trembled as he spoke, and his muscles twitched. He had gone mad . . . *mad!*

"I would suggest, then," said the doctor, "that the complaint would better come from you. Of course," he hastened to add, "we physicians will support you. As you say, the law must be enforced."

"And . . . the penalty?"

"A fine and imprisonment. But I dare say in her case the warning would be sufficient. By the way, changing the subject, I've lost Ted Sayor. Gone, bag and baggage. Left his hotel. No address." He smiled and flicked the ashes from his cigar. "Poor fellow," he said, "he won't last long now. I'd have taken care of him while he lived, out of friendship for his father. But I've done my duty by the boy, and I have no time to hunt for him."

Shortly thereafter complaint was lodged against Madam Galuth as a violator of the beneficent Wess law. Her arrest followed. An injunction restraining her from the practice of the curative arts was secured pending her hearing, which, owing to the stressful conditions then prevalent, was set some weeks ahead.

"Has she lost any cases?" demanded Benson, bristling like an angered mastiff.

"I think not," said Rowley, "but a case was taken from her, a child. Its parents were afraid to let her handle it further. Shortly afterward they turned the case over to a doctor. Roake heard of it and asked to be called on the case. The child died. Now charges of manslaughter are made, both against her and the parents of the child, the inference being, of course, that if the doctor had had the case in time the child would have lived."

"Well, by G . . . Look here, Rowley, could Roake have saved that child if he had had the case from the beginning?"

Doctor Rowley shrugged his shoulders. "Then she is also charged with infraction of the quarantine rules," he went on. "The influenza, you know, is considered contagious."

"It isn't contagious!" Benson loudly contradicted. "But how are we going to pound that fact into the puddin' headed public? By the way, what's the death-list for to-day?" He seized the *Courier* and scanned it, then sat back with an exclamation. "Lord, they're dying by thousands! I wish I had my insurance money back; I'm afraid my company will blow up.

Why, the beneficiary fund of one fraternal insurance organization that I know of has already fallen from $12,000,000 to a paltry $700,000. Where's it going to end?" He paused. Then: "By the way, do you understand now why Madam Galuth could not lead her cohorts? She must have foreseen just what has happened, her arrest. The sick were, of course, her first consideration. She worked for them until Roake stopped her. . ."

"It was Whittier who made the complaint."

"Humph! He can't heal. . . What's that about not being able to enter in, and hiding the key so's nobody else can get in either? How's that for the motive of a spiritual guide, eh? Lord, but this poor old world needs a leader! Oh, for a Moses!" He paused for a moment, as if held by a new thought. "I say, Rowley," he resumed, "things certainly are edging toward peace in Europe. . . No, not real peace, but a cessation of their insane slaughter. The Hindenburg line is breaking fast. The Germans are hollering '*Kamerad*'. I look for hostilities to end any day now. And then . . ." He fell to musing. Presently he looked up. "Rowley," he said, "did you ever hear of Marian Whittier? No? Humph!"

CHAPTER 9

IN the guise of an armistice Israel's adversary turned from mechanics to subtler modes. The Ahab of Potsdam and his priest-professors had proved exceptional channels for paralyzing the modern concept of Christianity through their application of the doctrine that where a state has the brute force to do a thing no moral force must be permitted to interpose. For is not this the theologian's tenet that man is a "free moral agent"? and could it not be relied upon to externalize in its natural consequence, total depravity? The spiritual fact that man is free to do naught but right could never have occurred to this mesmerized modern Ahab, who, when his dark mission was ended, fell afoul of the very fear he had inspired and took to his heels.

As always, error's virus had corroded and ruined the very channels through which it had belched forth upon a gassed world. The fear with which Germany would have slain her adversary now sapped the foundations of her own morale; the pandemic of hypnotic fear that attempted destruction of the American army through sudden death had reacted, and the back-wash of the contagion swept over the centers of its origin.

The September drive of the British against the Hindenburg line appeared absurdly successful. Odin had definitely failed. Ludendorf threw up his hands in despair. Attila's progeny tossed away their impotent material weapons, and Bulgaria collapsed. A super-Sedan loomed terrifyingly. Staring at it, dumfounded, the German nerve snapped, and the haughty House of Hohenzollern went crashing into the dust. On November 9th Germany was a republic; on the 11th an awesome hush fell upon the battlefields, and the frightful holocaust that had blotted out 10,000,000 human lives, that had submerged a world in unspeakable woe and entailed a monetary wastage of more than $200,000,000,000 was brought to a temporary close. The rough work was done. For error's subtler schemes new channels were required.

"But for Christianity, the Germans would have won!" gasped the unthinking rector of St. Jude's in hysteric relief. Alas! in a saner moment he learned that, had Christianity not long since been driven from the earth, the war never would have been begun.

The Assyrian drew back, battered, bleeding, confounded, but with his spirit of mad hate unquenched. Israel, dazed and staggering, felt no stimulus to exultation and penned no psalms. It was as if she realized that her truce with the Chaldean had closed but another phase of a struggle that must endure until Israel herself should acknowledge the One God and exchange her muniments of matter for the really potent armament of Spirit. She had agreed to a suspension of the mad exertions of material force; but she knew that the war had merely assumed a more subtle but no less destructive and despicable form, a war in the sacred name of peace.

The smoke of battle rose on the sighing winds and revealed the world a graveyard. "It is the *Götterdämmerung!*" cried the despairing Assyrian, not knowing the fell mesmerism that had used him. "The spirit of man in shadow!" echoed exhausted Israel, sick with the sight of the appalling ruin.

Nations lay dead; death grinned from cold hearthstones and fallen altars; Christianity was dead; the Angelus was dead; fields and forests dead; whole villages dead; faiths dead; hopes dead; aspirations dead; the torn hillsides nauseating with human dead. Famine, disease, degradation, spiritual disintegration, all rode hard in the van of death. Russia was sinking in the mire of anarchy, with night dropping its sable shade upon her; Austria writhed in the agonies of spiritual, intellectual, and economic death; Poland and Serbia glistened white with the bleaching bones of their myriad dead; France, waking from a momentary intoxication of joy, mourned a million dead, and a

dwindling population dying in the hour of illusive victory; Italy, stricken by her human losses, tottered under her death-laden debts, while her starving workmen seized her factories in a frenzy of despair, only to discover no raw materials and no funds with which to purchase that they might stave off death; England—victorious, if you will—bowed in unutterable grief at the tomb of her dead manhood, knowing in her desolated heart that she must arise to a renewal of the ancient struggle even more frightful and terrifying; America, plague-ravaged, danced in a mad delirium of worship of Jeroboam's calves. . .

The "war to end war" had mocked its victims: eighteen months after the penning of the armistice sixteen wars were raging and twenty million human beings stood at the point of starvation; more than half the children of Austria had perished miserably, and death had claimed every babe in Serbia and Poland up to the age of three. The era of "Business As Usual" had died; the "Don't Care Age" had been given birth. A century before Christ the House of Israel had fallen under the influence of Odin, of the "good old German god", and embraced a religion founded upon sorcery, witchcraft, and magic; twenty centuries later Israel poured out its blood to save the world from the same "Kultur"; but because she had not yet learned to know the God of her fathers she wavered in spiritual uncertainty, then plunged headlong into a demoniac rigadoon.

The sense of hopelessness which had driven Otto Hoeffel to the dance of death in Jerusalem had now seized the reins of the human mind. Between the memory of a hideous past and the menace of an uncertain future the pent spirit of man went mad. To live in the mental vacuity of mere toil, to achieve nothing but an escape from starvation, to bring children into the world only that they too shall work the treadmill of mere hopeless existence and breed other economic clods, to doggedly pursue this ghastly round till death mercifully intervene—this was the mental stage at which millions had arrived; it was this maddened state of mind that error had so subtly produced in its war upon the Word. Physical force was not half so potent a weapon.

An epidemic of frenzied pleasure-seeking swept over the hectic earth. Waves of wild spending, of plunging into unhealthy amusements, of riotous display, of crude eccentricities, followed in its wake. An era of commercial cannibalism entered: man devoured man through godless extortions; the food and rent profiteers, like disgusting vampires, drooled with the blood of their fellows; a suffering world became cynical of suffering; crime rolled over society in obliterating waves;

the insane desire for the speedy acquisition of gold and the crazed fascination of consuming it on human lusts was but the repetition of Israel's ancient sin.

"But what are we coming to?" cried the rector of St. Jude's, aghast.

"Pretty soft, eh?" a bricklayer observed to his companion, as they reclined on the wall which they were leisurely, uninterestedly, erecting. "Fourteen dollars a day for this, and loaf half the time. Pretty soft, eh?"

"But we should be gittin' fifteen an' shorter hours," growled the still discontented other in reply. It was a potent demonstration—though the twain saw it not—that the spirit of man shall not know content till it seek its rejected God.

The pursuit of questionable wealth and its prodigal waste passed rapidly into a veritable contagion. Its fruitage was a maddening discontent, a wild unrest, a spirit of brutish egoism, and mortals became like the serpents in Carlyle's basket, each fighting, hissing, squirming to rear its head above the rest. The hope that the demand for higher wages and fewer hours might be based on a genuine desire to employ the additional leisure for self-betterment was mocked by the laborers themselves. Material lust only, debasing and self-destructive, inspired the demand. Error kills in the guise of good. Centuries of sitting on the egg of materiality has failed to hatch spiritual content.

Wages soared in pyrotechnic flights, and prices chased them. Former values went to the scrap heap with obsolete ideas of morality and conscience. The notion that a man owed anything to society met raucous ridicule. Men acted upon the belief that conditions would last while they lived, that death dropped a final curtain, and "the future be damned!" The rôle of Dives was assumed by countless thousands—that his experience in another state of consciousness was likewise duplicated is a permissible assumption on the demonstrated fact that life, as we know it, is what we are alive to, is our consciousness of life, and consciousness is mental activity and a direct function of what we think.

The subtlety of error's modes might elicit admiration but for their very hideousness. To shatter a civilization reared on commercialism is to the average man an appalling calamity, for his heart dwells in his purse; yet the quenching of ideas by the cloud of black ignorance which drew after the war remains a calamity far less reparable. It was inevitable that the "Don't Care Age" should merge into "The Latter Age of Ignorance" if Israel continued to reject her God. The boasted intellectuality of the cultured world was dissipated by the war,

its intellectuals drafted, slain, or scattered, dismayed, dispirited, disillusioned. The publishing of newly revealed ideas became prohibitive; authorship languished under the blighting hand of exorbitant costs. There was slight stimulus to be drawn from the lessened world-morale, though here and there Dantean word-pictures of the hellish rending of human flesh in battle held the sensation-mongering mortal mind fascinated by their very gruesomeness. Interest in real literature perished in the frenzied getting and spending; cultural ideas died nascent while the mind reveled in the contemplation of high-powered cars. Faddists sprang up, like mirobolant mushrooms, from the rotten soil of human thought to embrace the opportunity offered by a diseased world-mind. A street-sweeper could insult intelligence in meaningless lines, and win acclaim as an author of "free" verse. And if he intoned his vocable mess to the twang of a catgut he might hold unthinking multitudes in bemused delirium. In the economic press artists of sincerity dropped their tools in despair and turned to coarse labor for sheer animal existence. Apparatus, chemicals, the essentials of their craft, were either unobtainable or now far beyond their slender means. Besides, the New Rich were unsympathetic to all but the faddist—the hod-carrier of yesterday could not be expected to appreciate a Rembrandt to-day. The intensive thought which for five wild years the world had directed to the contemplation of the power of brawn had become externalized: labor was regnant, wielding an autocracy that must elicit the envy of a Hohenzollern. The glorious privilege of work for work's sake vanished. The typesetter might well scorn the income of the author whose book he set.

In wasted Europe starving professors strove to carry forward the torch of learning, though they now lectured to beggared students in halls that tottered for lack of funds to support them. Libraries closed. Centers once famous for their intellectual culture became extinct. A pall drew over the minds of their thinkers. A ban of hatred lay upon the exchange of ideas, upon intellectual communication between European nations. Under it culture died, vision narrowed, spiritual concepts flickered out, and materiality waxed grosser and more noxious. Bowed beneath mountainous war-debts, with its economic life shattered, its earning power well-nigh destroyed, still consuming with hatred bred of animal fear, a prey to racial prejudices, betrayed by its spiritual guides and mocked by Baal, the broken world struggled through the gathering shadows, its consciousness of life a chaos.

"But we must make haste to get back to the normal, to our pre-war status!" the worried rector of St. Jude's urged.

But what *is* the normal? For was it not these very pre-war conditions that caused the war?

Human history is but the mortal counterfeit of divine unfoldment. It repeats itself in vicious circles, for the mortal mind is without basis of Principle, and revolves in a limited orb. By 1914 the world was in an orgy of material production. It could not close the doors of its stuffed warehouses, and it smiled and proceeded to pull them down to build greater. The world was spiritually asleep in the deep sleep of materiality that had overwhelmed the allegorical Adam. Its vaunted civilization, based on unmoral systems which had been pursued to their limits, was ready for the scrap heap—and to the scrap heap it went. Materiality is the antithesis of spirituality, and in 1914 the matter-intoxicated world was spiritually, morally bankrupt.

For matter, even from the standpoint of the physicists, is wholly metaphysical, a thing of thought. It is the externalization of the mortal thoughts and beliefs held in the human mentality as truths. It is a mental concept, founded on the suppositional opposite of true Substance. Therefore it is a delusive falsity, error coming to mankind in the guise of good. It is unsatisfying, unsustaining, disintegrating, contaminating, demoralizing. He who gives it intelligence yields it his own; he who pursues it pursues death. And the world had pursued it madly.

It was a "Don't Care Age" that followed the armistice. It was "The Latter Age of Ignorance". And it was likewise the age of "The New Paganism". After 1900 years of Christianity the world was still worshiping gods as illusive as the mythical denizens of Olympus. And the scepter of Zeus had passed to Self. It was a period of frenzied self-determination, self-expression—not "Thy will", but *mine;* not "to reflect Thee", but to express a wholly human and mortal concept, an illusive, visionary, fragile thing called Self. Thus did animal magnetism perpetuate the destructive delusion of minds many and continue to bar out from the peace councils of homes and nations the saving knowledge of the One Mind that is Israel's true God. The slogan of "The New Paganism" was an echo of Cain's guilty question. Its doctrine, pushed to the ultimate, has made mankind a murderer.

Never had the world been so steeped in hatred as when, in 1918, Israel declared a truce with her adversary; never had men hated their fellow men so widely, so deeply, so venomously. And they hated because they feared. And they feared lest they might not express to the full their false sense of Self. Such was the delusion by which error continued to blind them and strike at the Word.

"Alas! the people are less eager to hear our message than ever before," wailed the distressed preachers. And the mob's answer came brutally: "Stop preaching theological theories and get down to the practical."

"Men who were good before the war have returned so changed!" cried others. "We cannot reach them! They have gone wrong! They do not attend church now!" And the retort was heard: "But why attend church to hear a mutilated Christianity preached?"

In the year that followed the signing of the armistice a prominent theological training school registered but three applicants! And in contrast, never was so large a proportion of humanity swayed by strange vagaries of thought, never were so many driven into the sloughs of doubt as the result of the world's bitter experience of organized religion.

And in the midst of the world-chaos incident upon a shattered concept of Christianity, the Church of Rome put forth a renewal of the papal claim to temporal power! . . .

Upon the spirit of man the shadow lay dark. But the spirit of mortal man is his soul—and that is his human sense of a cosmos of matter, a universe of his own fabrication out of his own dark thought. Nor did the war cast the shadow —nay, it was the falling of the shadow itself that caused the war. Spiritual starvation ultimated in spiritual death: there was no nutriment in the dried husks of theology. The ancient dogma lacked the essential vitamines.

In its spiritual chiaroscuro the morally blunted world again rejected Israel's God for the politicians. And the politicians have ever been error's great allies. Through the Emperor Constantine in the fourth century the politicians quenched primitive Christianity; through the politicians of Potsdam in the twentieth was the soul of Germany ruined; by the politicians is the art of healing now betrayed in a world sick unto death; through the politicians was a false peace concluded between Israel and the Assyrian that must eventually flower into a harvest of future discord.

For peace was not made over the Sermon on the Mount, but over the sword. Error sat at the council-table and dictated a peace of force. Error leered through the sinister smiles of the seasoned diplomatists at Versailles and blew its withering breath upon the "Fourteen Points". The plea of the Christ was denied that the nations' shameful lusts might be satiated and revenge and greed return their verdict. In the Salle de l'Horloge Cain's bloody slogan drowned mercy's tender cry. Error's completest triumph of the Great War was the Versailles truce that gave breath to the panting belligerents ere the next dia-

bolical phase of the drive against the Word be launched. As in the distant days of Ezekiel and Ezra, Israel lost a world-opportunity by again rejecting the One God.

CHAPTER 10

FROM the capitals of the world the philosophers looked out over the human waste and sighed: "Better for mankind that it perish!" But from Marian Whittier's lips rose the prophetic query of the Hebrew seer: "Why will ye die?"

It was in January, two months after the signing of the armistice, that the little band of Israel's followers arrived in London. They came with a hush upon their thought, and with a great awe in their souls. To Simeon Penberry it was as if he had at length emerged from utter darkness into the light of day. "How in God's name we got through, I can't yet understand!" he often muttered in those first days of his return to Penberry Hall. "If the 'lost ten tribes' went through what we did in reaching England, no wonder it took them centuries! Br-r-r-r! But we've got it! Egad! we've *got* it! We are Israel! . . . And the Bible is our history! . . . God in heaven, who'd have believed it!". . .

And even as he spoke he seemed to hear the roar of the huge presses of Oxford and Cambridge, ceaselessly sending forth the story of Israel to a world dying for want of knowledge of Israel's God.

"And the girl says spiritual Israel will come through literal Israel," he murmured again and again. "Egad! if I might prophesy I'd say spiritual Israel will be revealed by *a woman!*"

And then his thought would again fall, for he had not found *"her"*. The passing of half a century had long since obliterated the footsteps of the one who had gone that way, being exiled, and whom he now so eagerly sought, yet without hope. But Marian had insisted that she still lived. "You will find her," she persisted. "No one can be lost in the Universe of Mind. When you have done your part, and when it is right, you will find her." But the old man would shake his head. "And yet," he comforted himself, "I *have* found her, in you."

From Palestine to Egypt, thence across into the ancient "Land of Guta", had Penberry been led by the eager girl—and he had journeyed with bulging eyes and mouth agape. Up through the "Gates of Israel" and into the ancient home of the royal Scythians they went; thence westward, through the Crimea, and again north, following the serpent's trail of Dan.

Everywhere did Marian reveal to her marveling companions the "waymarks" which Israel had set up in that memorable journey of centuries ago. "Why," cried Penberry, "they positively fly up and strike us in the face! Why haven't we known about this before? We've been blind! . . . blind!"

And as they journeyed Marian unfolded to her companions Israel's fascinating story, and together they re-wrote the missing pages of human history. "When it is complete," she repeatedly reminded them, "you will see that it proves the existence and character of the One God; it proves that the Bible sets forth truth when spiritually interpreted; it shows that the prophecies have been fulfilled and the promises kept; and it places upon us each a responsibility of the greatest and most glorious nature, namely, to work out our individual salvation and demonstrate spiritual Israel by overcoming error, even as Jacob struggled and overcame it at Peniel."

Obstacles opposed them at every step—a journey which would have been difficult in pre-war days was now, even after the armistice, fraught with hardship extreme and constant danger. Zuleyka's great influence with the Arabs and the nomad Asiatic tribes procured them safety through the Caucasian pass into Russia. The protection and prestige of the British Government were frequently invoked. But again and again Penberry would have turned back but for Marian. And then he came to learn that the girl was not relying on the protection of human governments, and that her faith in her mission included the certainty of being able to accomplish it. Thereafter he ceased to interpose additional obstacles in the nature of his own fears and disbeliefs. David Barach, who had witnessed the never to be forgotten event in the Tower of Antonia, lent himself to the girl as to a superior officer, but with a faith now irrefragable. And hourly he thanked the God of his fathers that he had been thus privileged to learn of her. Zuleyka continued to demonstrate her great ability in the handling of the varied eastern peoples with whom they came in contact, and in her wide knowledge of their tongues. She had been over this same route before, with one whom Simeon Penberry never mentioned without brimming eyes; she had lived in these southern lands and was recognized in many of the towns through which they passed. The wisdom of God was indeed manifest to Simeon Penberry in the assembling of this little band bent on so great, so vital a mission to mankind. "Remarkable women, both of them!" he had frequent occasion to exclaim. "The reason why Marian is so fitted to make this investigation is that she is untrammeled by theology. She is like *her*. Zuleyka is a weird creature, uncanny in her wisdom

. . . but careless on occasion. Egad! I wonder what was in the package that she lost . . . I wonder . . . and from the German major. Egad! I'd give a kingdom to know." For the Egyptian had long since confided to him that, shortly before Jerusalem fell, Otto Hoeffel had entrusted her with a packet, closed with many red seals, bearing an impress of the German eagles, and inscribed: *Concerning the family of the Reverend Wilson Whittier, Crestelridge, N. Y., U. S. A.* She had thrust the packet into her dress. In the agitation of the hour she had forgotten it. Nor did thought of it recur to her until they were about to depart from Jerusalem. Then search for it proved unavailing. "Concerning the Whittier family," Penberry would often muse after Zuleyka had confessed the loss. "Why on earth should a German officer try to send me a packet regarding the Whittiers? Egad! I'd give a ransom to know." And he set down the loss of the packet as the only demerit against the Egyptian who had served him faithfully through many years.

In their weeks of hazardous journeying and intensive research Marian had been quite cut off from the world that she had known, but on arriving in London she at once despatched a letter to Madam Galuth, announcing the successful termination of the unique exploit. She had had no word from Crestelridge since leaving Jerusalem, a year before. Often in the interval her thought had turned to Alden Cragg, yet as often she recalled it and directed it into other channels. That she would herself return to Crestelridge seemed unlikely. The rectory doors had been closed against her. "You'll stay with me," Penberry had settled the question of her future. "We'll first make our report to the British Government . . . I say, Marian, when Parliament gets it there will be a stir! Egad! They'll decide on a different course in regard to America, eh? When they learn that Ephraim and Manasseh are brothers and that the future of the world depends on Brother John and Brother Jonathan sticking together! Egad! I say, we can see why your friend Roake wants the British Empire dismembered, eh? The canny rascal! Br-r-r-r!"

What Marian and Penberry laid before the British Government in a secret document as the full result of their investigation was the story of the People of Israel. That it entered not into the councils of Versailles was not due to any lack of authenticity in the story itself, but that Ephraim, more materialistic than Manasseh, still feared to trust Israel's God.

Scarcely had the report been submitted when a cable message was delivered to Marian. It was from Madam Galuth. *Alden needs you,* it read. Nothing more.

Instantly the girl was transported back to that memorable night in Jerusalem when she had parted from Alden. "I shall call to you," he had said, "through the darkness of Crestelridge . . ."

The darkness of Crestelridge! None knew better than she how great that darkness. And she knew that Alden would not have called to her had not that blackness engulfed him. A horde of fell suggestions rained down upon her. She knew nothing of Alden's work in that intervening year, but she had known when she sent him from her that he would seek to demonstrate Israel in the very temples of Bel—and that, she knew, was a work that had cost the Nazarene his human life.

She flew with the message to Simeon Penberry. "What," he cried, "that fellow? I'd forgotten him. Egad! he can't have you. It's a trick! Br-r-r-r!"

"He needs me; I must go at once!" she urged.

"What's happened? I'll search the files of the New York papers for news of Crestelridge. . ."

"We can't wait for that! . . . And nothing ever *happens!* . . . Principle governs! . . ."

"Humph!" He shrugged his shoulders. "You love the fellow. You . . . I . . ." He stopped, stared at the girl, gulped down something in his throat, then burst out: "Damme! you shall go. I haven't followed Israel's trail these months without learning *something!* Go to him, my girl! Old Penberry's millions are back of you! If you need me, cable, and I'll follow you when Parliament will let me! And," his voice fell, "when I lay these hands on Wilson Whittier . . . Br-r-r-r!"

"I shall take David Barach with me," Marian said.

"But, I say, why Barach?" exclaimed the puzzled man. "I want him here!"

The girl shook her head. "I do not know . . . but I feel that I shall need him. . . It is *very* dark in Crestelridge. . ."

Two days later the girl and Barach—whose term of enlistment in the British army had expired some weeks before—were on the Atlantic, westward bound.

* * * * * *

Looking into Crestelridge that fall and winter of 1918-19 the world would have seen—itself. Plague-ridden, and with a death rate out of all proportion to its population, Crestelridge danced in an orgy of terror, its jazz a sob. Ted Sayor, huddled in a dirty chair in a dark corner of a cheap cabaret, where he had secured employment as night piano player, shivered fearfully in his threadbare clothes that bagged about his wasted form and voiced the world's deep plaint. "What in God's name has come upon us? Four years ago I was Ted Sayor,

clubman, rich, well, happy; to-day I am a nameless beggar, dying miserably like an outcast dog! What happened? And why? What had I done? What had we all done? Cragg a murderer, waiting to die! Harris dead! Madeline dead! Freddy Kerl dead! Wallie Black dead! Old Chaddock an idiot! St. Jude's on the reef! Marian Whittier gone, swallowed up! Everybody crazy, dying! . . . What in God's name has happened? And why, *why, WHY?*"

Crestelridge could not answer, but ceased not to dance like a galvanized corpse. External restraints had gone to the winds: it was not liberty that had been saved by the stupendous sacrifice in France, but *license!* The decadence of morality which followed in the wake of the war became almost an organized attack upon virtue; the shame of war was quickly exchanged for a post-war depression of soul that took repulsive form in sloth, in aggressive egoism, in cynical insensibility to human misery, in vindictiveness and the serf-like submissiveness which such as Doctor Roake most desired. Crestelridge society —mirroring the world—seized upon the cessation of hostilities in Europe as a pretext for the wildest eccentricities: it became recklessly vulgar in dress and conduct; it threw sanctity of the home to the dogs; it formed into clubs to lap up the pseudo-art of Post Impressionism; it gushed in forums over the vulgarities of "novels of passion" and the wooden banalities of "free" verse; it dawdled over the "realists", the anarchists, and the horrorists of the "new" literature; it babbled learnedly of "subversive philosophy", while twenty million of its brethren starved in Europe and the clouds of fresh wars and new plagues were everywhere gathering: it found its children infected with the virus of "self-determination", found itself unable to cope with them, and blandly announced that the modern way to bring up the young is *to refrain from interfering with them until grown!* Communism and anarchy of conscience reigned—a policy of reversal, wherein society deliberately chose to pay vastly more for the driving of its limousines than for the driving of sound ideas into the mentalities of its children.

To a certain few in Crestelridge—among them the rector—that fall and winter of 1918-19 were but a prolonged nightmare. Life to the rector seemed to have become an endless round of funerals. He saw naught but death everywhere. His taut nerves quivered incessantly: the jangling of the telephone bell would throw him into a fit of trembling, for it had come to mean a call to the bier of death.

Meanwhile, his duties in the office of Doctor Roake had grown in volume and complexity. He would have abandoned

them, long since, if he had dared—but the doctor's long, white fingers, so dextrous in delicate surgical operations, seemed to the rector to have closed at last about the Whittier throat, for upon the heels of the armistice had come the exultant announcement by Mrs. Whittier of the engagement of her daughter Ethel to Doctor Roake!

Society went wild over the news, and Mrs. Whittier, with a sob of relief, now saw herself, after long years of patient climbing, with many slips and reversals, definitely confirmed as social leader in a community nowhere surpassed for its material wealth, its traditions, prestige, and ultra conservatism. And the rarest jewel in her diadem was her immediate elevation to the coveted presidency of the "Norman Dames".

It had become evident to the rector that Doctor Roake had seen into the future with a vision that was prophetically penetrating, and that he had prepared himself to profit by what was certain to come. Far from destroying autocracy, the war had appeared actually to invigorate it. Governments everywhere governed more rigorously than before, and peoples were submitting with greater humility. Excessive taxation might arouse them; but Doctor Roake's subtle plan gave without exacting a visible return. Probably never in pre-war days had greater despotism obtained than in 1918-19, and never had there obtained a more serf-like spirit in man. The doctor had apparently reckoned on this far in advance; the hour was swiftly approaching when, the rector knew, he would capitalize it. His proposal that the State grant subsidies to the physicians of rural districts would, if accepted, nationalize the Roake plan, and with it the Roake practice of medicine. And it would hugely swell the membership of the organization and increase its power incalculably. Doctor Roake seemed always to move at the precise moment to effect the success of his strategy: in the food shortage of that winter he secured the passage of a measure rendering it necessary to obtain a doctor's permit before certain necessities could be purchased by a civilian. When national prohibition should obtain—as he knew that it would—he intended that the physician's prescription should replace the open bar.

Nor had the doctor reckoned falsely in regard to the churches, his potent allies in securing the womanhood of the country—and, eventually, of the world. The Church had shown itself the most submissive of the submissive: not one of the ecclesiastical authorities of Christendom had raised his voice in unmistakable pronouncement against the multitudinous iniquities of the war and the post-war that followed the armistice! It was incredible—and yet it was a condition not lightly

to be overlooked by one with the material ambitions of Doctor Roake.

Whether the pandemic had hurt him or not, he could not say. It was not of human agency, and he feared its effect in forcing upon the terrorized public an appreciation of a power greater than his own. He had cursed the fate that had loosed this thing at the precise moment of his triumph and made necessary the postponement of his convention. Now that the plague had apparently reached its peak and was decreasing, he was again issuing the call for a great health-council to assemble in convention in Crestelridge on the first day of February under the auspices of his religio-medical organization, generally known as the Roake plan.

Yet he did so with a vague fear at his heart. He had the unaccountable feeling that, had he been able to hold the convention on the date originally planned, all would have been well, but that now the results were bound to be, to say the least, uncertain. And yet, for the sake of his prestige, he knew that the convention must be held.

Fortunately, he had some months previously predicted an epidemic to follow the great war. The ample fulfillment of his prediction in a measure sustained his prestige and neutralized his impotence in coping with it. He had frequently made the assertion that epidemics were wholly mental, and that he alone could at will create one, and at will cause it to disappear. He had more than once deliberately frightened patients to death in the early days of his practice, merely that he might study the effects of excessive fear on the human system. And he had once caused a mild panic, an epidemic of fear, in the Ghetto of New York City, by mere suggestion to the ignorant parent of a healthy child. The child died; others followed; and another item of great "scientific" interest was entered among the doctor's private memoranda.

And he proceeded further to reëstablish his shaken prestige by advancing the theory that the pandemic of Spanish influenza possibly might have been occasioned by the passing of the earth through a locus of noxious gases in interstellar space. The episode was then distinctly an "act of God". And then he gravely predicted a return of the disease the following year, and urged adoption of the defensive measures which he had prepared in accord with the Roake plan.

The prediction roused Doctor Benson to the point of fury. "Kill him!" he shouted, pacing his little office. "I'll head a mob to hang him and every other doctor who predicts the return of the 'flu'! That prediction is murder, plain murder —and some day, by heaven! there'll be laws that will convict a doctor for saying such things!"

Meantime, the hearing of Madam Galuth had been duly held. The white-haired woman freely admitted that she had healed the sick by drugless practices, that she had handled cases of the influenza without calling in the aid of a legalized doctor of medicine. It was an infraction of the Wess law—yet life was far more precious than the observance of a man-made code. The ancient Hebrews had sacrificed life for the law, but not so had the Master taught—and she was merely striving to obey to the full the injunctions of the Nazarene. . .

She was fined, reprimanded, and discharged with an admonition and a threat. If she were permitted to break the law at will, would not others derive encouragement from her example and do likewise? A second offense would cost her dear. These were no times for experimentation! . . .

The dance went wildly on. The pandemic raged unchecked; destruction lay about them; the morrow menaced them; but the mad seeking for the pleasures of sense abated not. And the church doors remained closed. Mrs. Whittier led in society's abandonment to the frenzied chase. She flaunted gay feathers and scintillating jewels, she dazzled with gowns of sumptuous satins and velvets in a kaleidoscopic confusion of flaring colors. The New Rich who had sprung up like toadstools on the rotted stumps of the Blacks and Kerls—for these now sat in ashes, mourning their dead—vied viciously with one another in an unprecedented display of wealth gotten through cannibalistic profiteering on their brother's needs. There was dancing at noon-time, at tea-time, at dinner, and night. The cafés overflowed, the hotels were choked. Motor parties dashed yelling and singing into Greater New York at all hours, with conspicuously underclad women lolling in the arms of roaring males whose pockets bulged with bills. If the restaurants charged less than five dollars for a sandwich and a cup of tea they lost patronage. The hod-carriers, garbage men, street-sweepers had money and demanded the privilege of demonstrating it. The jewelers doubled their prices; they trebled them; they increased them a thousand per cent in some instances, and were still swamped with frantic buyers. Grimy laborers caught the unhealthy infection: factory workers bought silk shirts on Saturday nights at $18 apiece, cut the sleeves to elbow length and used them to work in during the week, and on the succeeding Saturday night bought others to replace them. It was the dominion of darkness that had drawn over the human soul.

CHAPTER 11

IN the wild chase many, unable to keep their feet, went down and were trampled to death. For weeks after fleeing from Doctor Roake Ted Sayor clung fitfully to his sense of life, knowing that he was fighting a losing battle. The wages which he earned playing the piano at night in the cheap cabaret scarce kept the vital spark aglow. The proprietor suspected that Ted was in hiding and capitalized his suspicion. Ted slept in a box in the damp cellar, shivering in a tattered blanket stiff with grime.

Often now as the wretched fellow sat at the piano, utterly oblivious of the throng whirling about him to the notes that danced from beneath his numb fingers, his thought would stray back to the shadow-world that he seemed once to have known, but that now lay wrapped in distant mists. And he would wonder if he had really known those people, or if it had been only a dream. But he knew that he had known them, that he had once lived their careless life of ease in matter, that vapid existence in a fool's paradise of the physical senses. And he knew that he had been warned to improve life's preparatory school—and the warning voice was Marian Whittier's. But he had yawned and stretched himself in his material luxury and murmured: "I should worry!" The evil which she predicted could not possibly come in his day. And why should he care what happened to future generations? Was he his brother's keeper? He knew, too, that a hand had been stretched to him to lift him from Dives' seat—and that hand had likewise been Marian Whittier's.

But he had meant to talk with her again. He had offered himself to her on that wild night ride from Cragg's party. He had been glad afterward that she refused him. To have married her would have meant loss of caste . . . and then, when he learned that she was gone, a sense of terrible desolation swept over him, as of one abandoned on a lone isle in a boundless sea. And he would sometimes burst into tears at thought of it and bow his head on the keyboard and sob. . .

Ted Sayor had floated out on the wings of sense, and they had dropped him into the ditch. Because, in those old gorgeous days of material ease, he had accepted the testimony of sense at its asserted value, he must now accept as equally real the thorns that lined the ditch into which he had fallen. Time was when the ablution of his rotund body was a matter of meticulous consideration; now he gazed often in horror at his

shrunken, pain-wracked frame and, in his keen realization of loss of Marian, cried aloud: "Alas! who shall rescue me from the obsession of the body, from this living death?" Time was when, from behind the bulwarks of his social prestige and material wealth, he could with momentary impunity aim his biting sarcasms at the foolish world and mock the exploded fallacies which form the basis of the insecure knowledge of the science of to-day; yet he now realized that his own thought had been not a whit less material than that at which he had sent his shafts—that his own mesmerism had been as surely the Adam-sleep of materiality as had been that of the world which he had so fulsomely ridiculed. Time was when the mere adjustment of his hat upon his head, or the gloves to his hands, had demanded hours of serious debate with his patient valet; now the dirty bowl in the cabaret lavatory mocked his pitiable efforts at respectability. But he dared not go to the public baths for fear of detection. He dared not even leave the building in which the cabaret was housed. The mere thought of detection by his former friends and of their ridicule kept his false sense of pride vigorous; and the dreadful fear of what might befall him at the hands of Doctor Roake held him trembling with apprehension in the noisome hold in which, like a hunted rat, he had taken refuge.

Through the fall months his life was one of harrowing ravages of soul and body. Around him the plague of influenza stalked, but he knew it would avoid him. He was a useless clod, an incumbrance upon society, but he was paying a debt, and he knew that the last farthing was still to be exacted. Yet the end was drawing nearer, ever nearer. He gazed at its approach horror-stricken, yearning, yet terrorized. "Oh, God," he often moaned, "that I had gone like a man to serve my country . . . that I had died under the flag! Now I am a traitor, a skulking slacker, a dirty coward, despised, branded, dying! 'My days are swifter than a weaver's shuttle, and are spent without hope'." Had he retained his health, he believed he should have eventually given himself to his country; but, alas! he had listened in an evil moment to the tempter; the bargain had been struck; and now his terrified soul was awaiting, Faust-like, the coming of Mephistopheles. With the cessation of hostilities and the return of the victory-crowned army he knew that his final payment would not be long delayed.

Darkly his thought dwelt in those black hours on Doctor Roake. "How could I?" he wailed, often and aloud; "how could I have fallen into the hands of the very forces I was not afraid of, the very things I opposed? What happened to me? What did Roake do? He suggested tuberculosis to me . . . he

suggested! . . . He's a necromancer; a magician; a devil! . . . and he got me! . . . God, he *got* me! But I needn't have done it! Oh, God, no! Nobody *needs* to sin!" And at night he would start up in terror, a scream on his dry lips, and his wasted body shaking, start up from hideous nightmares that wrecked his tortured soul, from terrifying dreams that he was Dives and that he was falling into a black pit, always frantically striving to grasp Marian Whittier's outstretched hand, but always falling . . . falling. . .

One night as he sat bowed over the sticky keyboard he heard a voice that he seemed to recognize. He turned his head involuntarily. At the same instant a soldier in the uniform of the United States army rose from a nearby table and came toward him. Ted gave a cry and got to his feet. "Boots!"

"Yes, sir, as you say, sir!" exclaimed the erstwhile valet, bowing awkwardly and utterly unable to hide his astonishment at thus discovering his former master. "I thought it could not be you, sir, but I couldn't seem to look at anybody else in the room, sir."

"Boots!" Ted clutched the other's arm frantically. "For God's sake, don't! How . . . how came you here?"

"Why, sir, I just dropped in with some of the boys. I arrived here yesterday. My regiment was among the first sent home. I've inquired all over town for you, sir. I heard that you were with Doctor Roake . . ."

"Boots!"

"I went there, and they told me that you had left . . ."

"Yes, yes! What else did they say?"

The great-hearted valet hesitated. "Why, sir, they said that you had been unfortunate in money matters, sir." He thrust out a hand and caught Ted, who swayed unsteadily as if to fall. "You . . . you appear ill, sir! Let me help you to a chair . . . here, at this table!" He threw an arm about the emaciated form and bore it easily to the chair.

For a moment he stood over the gasping invalid. Then he sat down beside him. "You . . . you are receiving treatment, of course, sir?"

Ted raised up. A pallid smile came into his wan, white face. "Oh, yes, the very best," he whispered. He turned and for a moment anxiously scanned the inmates of the room. Then: "You did not know I was . . . in this place? No? And you think they don't know it at Roake's offices? I . . . I'd rather they wouldn't. I . . . I have been a bit unfortunate, but I shall pick up again, Boots, I shall pick right up. This is . . . temporary, you know. And you must never say that you found me here. Promise, Boots."

"Yes, sir, as you say, sir," the other returned, regarding Ted incredulously. "But, sir, I . . ." He paused uncertainly. "I would like," he resumed, "to . . . to help you, sir, if I can. . ."

Ted held up a hand. "You forget your position, Boots," he said with dignity. "This financial embarrassment is, as I told you, merely temporary. And you must go now, Boots. I mustn't be seen talking with you. I . . ." He choked back the lump in his throat. "You are looking wonderfully well and strong," he murmured wistfully. "I . . . You know that I couldn't go, don't you, Boots? It was my health. . . Boots," the voice was low and eager, "did you . . . see anybody you knew . . . in France?"

"Mr. Earl, sir. Assistant rector of St. Jude's."

"Yes! And? . . ."

"He died in my arms, sir."

"God, that it had been I!"

"Yes, sir, as you say, sir," the amazed valet murmured automatically.

Ted leaned closer. "Boots . . ." He hesitated. But the question *had* to come. "Boots, did you see . . . Marian Whittier? Do you know where she is now?"

The other shook his head. "She was in Palestine, but I understand she disappeared. Never heard of again, sir."

Ted's head sank. A shiver ran through his frail body. He sat like a criminal with the words of doom ringing in his ears.

"Mr. Sayor, sir, this—if I may be permitted to say it—this is an unpleasant place for you to be in, sir, and you in such bad health. Might I ask, sir, if you are comfortable lodged?"

Ted raised his head. Comfortably lodged! The box and the tattered blanket in the cellar below! He laughed aloud. "As solicitous as ever for my well-being, Boots. The way you used to tuck me into bed! . . . But rest easy: I am very comfortable." Again he shuddered.

"But, sir," in a tone of deep anxiety, "if I might suggest it, you don't seem quite able to work, you know, sir. I would suggest a rest. I have excellent lodgings in a very good rooming house, and . . . well, sir, I would like you to share them with me and let me look after you until you are in better health, sir."

The old sense of caste flamed up within Ted and he rose indignantly. How dared this valet-soldier make such a suggestion to him, a *Sayor!* The impudent fellow was taking advantage of the inevitable leveling which the war had produced! *He,* share his former valet's lodgings? It was preposterous! And his face flushed hot.

"No offense, sir," Boots hastened to add. "It was difficult for me to make the suggestion, sir, but you seem in need. . ."

Ted's anger passed. He laid a hand gently on the other's shoulder. "Dear old Boots!" he murmured. Then his eyes filled, and he turned away.

The stuffy room was filled with a motley crowd of pleasure seekers. Ted stared at them for a moment through his blurred eyes. They seemed to mock him with their very chase for the vanities of which he had been so ruthlessly stripped. And as he looked a great fear seized him, fear born of his discovery by his faithful valet. He shivered. His teeth chattered. Then, in panic, he darted into the crowd that swarmed over the floor.

* * * * * *

Human history is but a repetition: the present is what has been. It is prophetic: that which has been mirrors that which is to come. History emphasizes, but does not reform. "The world is very evil, the times are waxing late," wailed the philosophers of seven centuries ago. In the winter following Israel's truce with her adversary the same wail reëchoed despairingly around the earth. It found voice in literature, the drama, art; it found fitting expression in the vanity fair of materialistic Crestelridge.

On the first day of January, Ethel Whittier became the wife of Dr. Jeremiah Roake. Her divorced husband, Alden Cragg, lay under sentence to die thirty days later. It was a situation that gave pause even to Mrs. Tellus' lightly pivoted tongue.

Doctor Roake had traveled far along the road of demonstration. From the hour when Marian Whittier had first combated his premise of the supremacy of evil, down to that stormy March night when Senator Chaddock had marveled at the probable results of a life conformed to such a thesis, the doctor had devoted himself to an intensive preparation. Since then, to the present hour, the truth of his premise had been established to his own satisfaction by a cloud of witnesses. Of the mental nature of the universe Doctor Roake had not the slightest doubt; matter he knew to be a phenomenon of the human mind—of energy, force, if you prefer—and he was firmly convinced of the reality of that mind and of its awful power. "For good and evil are but relative terms," he would insist over and over. "What is food for one is another's poison. It is the *power* of the human mind, or will, that is the vital thing. It is the ability to control one's thought and the thought of others that establishes my theory." But as he glanced back at the way strewn with victims he involuntarily shuddered. "Yet," he reflected, "it is of incalculable interest to science."

The Whittier-Roake wedding was ostentatious in the extreme, though the rector fain would have had it otherwise. And the rector read the service, though he would have given his life to have avoided it. St. Jude's doors were still closed "On account of the epidemic," yet—strange anomaly!—the rectory and parish house overflowed with the concourse assembled to witness the exchange of vows between these two so oddly mated.

"Who would have ever dreamed of such a thing!" Mrs. Tellus went about exclaiming to herself and others. And yet she talked discreetly, for Mrs. Whittier, as president of the "Norman Dames", was a social power to be reckoned with.

"Ethel Whittier! Humph!" Doctor Benson muttered under his breath as he scanned the extravagant newspaper reports. "Her soul died with Harris Chaddock. This wedding is a cash transaction, with Penberry's millions the sum involved. H'm! The people are not taxed to support the Roake plan, for Roake finances his scheme elsewhere. Canny, by heaven! . . . Which leads me to suspect that the Cragg and Sayor fortunes might be accounted for in the same manner."

As before, Ethel's health would not permit of a wedding journey, and she was conveyed immediately after the ceremony to "Craggmont", her gift from the doctor. This coveted property, for which she had married Alden Cragg, and for which, on his inability to deliver it, she had given herself to Doctor Roake, had at last dropped into her lap.

On the day following the wedding Doctor Roake called at the rectory on his way to his offices. There were matters, delayed by the wedding, that he must bring to the rector's attention at once. As he stepped from his car the postman was just turning in at the rectory. Doctor Roake, as was always his wont with employes of whatever class, greeted him cordially. "I'll take the rector's mail in and save you that many steps," he offered. And the flattered postman gladly complied.

Among the letters there was a large envelope, heavy, and bearing foreign postage. It caught the doctor's attention and held it. An end was torn, and the doctor glanced within. The envelope contained a packet, with many red seals.

A feeling of apprehension came over the doctor. He studied the envelope as he walked slowly toward the rectory. He paused at the door and stood weighing it and pondering its possible content, with his wonder and apprehension growing with each instant. Strange, he mused, that as he gazed at that torn envelope with its mysterious, red-sealed packet, his thought should turn to Marian Whittier! . . .

He glanced about furtively. Then he slipped the big envelope into a pocket of his ulster, just as the maid answered his ring. "Please tell the rector," he said kindly, though his voice shook slightly, "that I am late this morning and cannot stop." And he handed her the rest of the mail.

Again in his flying car, the doctor cautiously drew out the big envelope and ripped it open with trembling fingers. The red-sealed packet within bore the German eagles and the inscription: *Concerning the family of the Reverend Wilson Whittier, Crestelridge, N. Y., U. S. A.* He feverishly broke the seals. The enclosed document was closely written in a hand that he recognized. "Otto Hoeffel!" he gasped. "A copy of his report on the Whittier family, made for the Intelligence Department of the German army!" He bent over the document, devouring it with avid eyes. "Good God!" he exclaimed at intervals. . .

Then, as he concluded the reading: "Marian Whittier! . . . She! . . . *She!*" He jammed the document into a pocket and sat back to think. His eyes were wide, and his facial muscles twitched. At times he would start forward, his lips moving; then would fall back with brows drawn into an ominous scowl.

And all that day he read and re-read the document and pondered the various theories that rose out of his heaving thought in regard to its advent in Crestelridge. "How did it happen to be sent to Whittier, and from Palestine?" he asked himself over and over. And then: "Otto Hoeffel! The low scoundrel tried to double-cross me! A murrain on him!" And often he would spring from his chair whispering hoarsely: "I must find her—if she is living! And old Penberry too! Why couldn't this have come before? God, what a mess! What a mess!"

* * * * * *

From the low cabaret Ted Sayor fled on the night that Boots discovered him, fled into the cold and darkness. The humiliating thought that the faithful Boots would insist on caring for him, that he might be forced to live dependent upon his former valet, made his cheeks burn. The consuming fear that his whereabouts might now become known to Doctor Roake combined with his shame to drive him forth to seek deeper hiding. Into the most impoverished district of Greater New York he went with his scanty hoardings. "Our sun has gone down; we must now freeze," he murmured. The effort to remain alive was become Sisyphean.

"Ye've got th' bugs, ain't ye?" demanded the evil-faced landlady of the wretched tenement into which he crept, and

scanning him closely. "Th' rent'll be a dollar a month more f'r that, an' y'r clothes when y're done wit 'em, wich ain't goin' to be long, so take good care of 'em."

In the cramped and grimy attic room, dimly lighted by a single dormer window with cracked and unwashed panes, Ted counted his slender resources, counted them over and over to see if perchance they might sustain him until . . . until . . . yes, that was it: until Marian Whittier should return.

But did he know that she would come? Ah, no. But his hours now were fretted with illusions. And among them was the obsession that she would come back, that she would find him, and that again she would stretch forth her hand to him. He would not refuse it again. Oh, no! For now he knew that none but she could save. . .

It became a death-struggle with his twin mistresses, Disease and Poverty. He could no longer work. He could no longer climb the five flights of stairs to his attic room. He had become a prisoner. His landlady brought him his scanty, unwholesome meals, and gloated over the coins which he paid her in return. "Y'r pile's gittin' low," she would comment gleefully. "I'll be settin' ye in th' street one o' these days." And the words so terrified him that at length he resolved to eat but one scant meal a day.

"She will come," he kept repeating. Even in his broken sleep, through his chattering teeth he would murmur: "She will come. She will come."

In his fearful loneliness he now spent hours dwelling on his past association with Marian, and trying vainly to recall what she had said to him. "She said it was Christianity, but that it was *scientific,*" he would muse. "And I know it wasn't Wilson Whittier's theological hodge-podge; and it had nothing to do with the toting around of dead saints' bones. . ." Alas! he had not been quite ready to hear her, not yet willing to forsake the pleasures of sense, and now he could not recall her words. He had wanted the false knowledge of the pleasurable senses, not the demonstrable knowledge of God. "And human knowledge is mere accumulation, accumulation in the worst sense of the term, of beliefs, opinions, and speculations that lead only to the ditch," he at last confessed. "Oh, those consequential pedants, those pompous theologians like Wilson Whittier, who have reached the boundaries of human wisdom! Won't they be surprised when they wake up after death and find that they are not in heaven! And yet, back of all the falsities which they teach, back of it all is the *real.* Ah, it was *that* that Marian tried to show me! And I would have none of it, but preferred instead the material symbols. And now these have decayed and left me crying: 'Vanity, vanity, vanity!' "

More and more, as the heavy shadows gathered, his thought became obsessed by the very things at which he had formerly scoffed. Often he would recall the words of a former statesman and molder of thought: "To be just with all men, to be merciful to those to whom mercy should be shown, to realize that there are some things that must always remain a mystery to us, and when the time comes for us to enter the great blackness, to go smiling and unafraid. This is my religion, my faith. . ." Ah, but such a religion afforded scant comfort in such dark hours as Ted's. Such a religion did not draw men to the healing, sustaining Father. Such a religion was scarce more than fatalism; it was not the Master's. Yet none can say that the Master did not know God.

It was the Nazarene's religion that Ted now believed Marian to have discerned, and that she had sought to impart to him. But he had been mesmerized. He had awaited the "convenient season". And it had not come, for—the subtlety of error!—*it never comes!*

With the mounting of living costs Ted's landlady raised her charges. It terrified him. If Marian should not come before his money was exhausted! . . . He must economize more closely! . . . He would not eat every day!

The measuring of his scanty hoard was the externalization of his cruelly limited thought: it is always the poor thought that constitutes poverty. And, as always, the more closely he hoarded, the more swiftly did it dwindle away. For true man is the expression of the limitless God. The Master taught it. And the world might to-day know it and banish forever its poverty and lack if it would turn from its systems of religion based, alas! on utter falsity, on tenets which make quite impossible the practical application of the Master's healing precepts.

As the days dragged by Ted at length became so weak that he kept to his wretched bed but for a short time each day, when he would painfully rise and crawl to the window to lie in the sunlight that filtered through the grime of the panes for a few fleeting minutes. Delirium now came often upon him. And always in his dreams he saw Marian Whittier standing with outstretched arms. And always he tried to go to her for healing. . .

Then the last of his money went: the constant measuring of his scanty hoard had increasingly limited his sense of supply until it at length vanished. He stared in terror into his landlady's ugly face when he offered her the last of his coins. He heard her mutter something incoherent about notifying the police and having him taken to the County Hospital or to the

Alms House. And her words seemed at first to palsy, then to galvanize him.

That night he crept from his cold bed. He had heard Marian Whittier call to him in his dreams, and he was obeying. With unspeakable effort he dressed himself in his frayed garments. Slowly he crept down the rickety stairways, stopping often in the bitter cold to rest, and slunk through the foul halls. His hands were without feeling when he pushed open the outer door and gained the quiet street.

It was midnight and intensely cold. Yet he seemed not to feel it. There was an elation of soul, as if he were embarking upon a wished-for journey. And he was glad as he moved away from the hideous tenement.

Contact with the cold outside seemed to bring a realization that he had heard Marian's voice only in a dream, and he paused. Bitter disappointment brought tears to his eyes. Then fear gripped him. . . But he could not climb those long flights of stairs again! And if he waited below he must freeze!

He went on, though without destination. He knew that his feeble strength would not carry him far, and then . . . "But I have no quarrel with death," he murmured. And he smiled.

The awful cold penetrated to his very soul. His bones ached. His blood seemed to freeze. He wondered what had become of his hands. And as he wandered he stumbled. And delirium again came upon him.

He roused at length to find himself clear in thought. He was sitting on a pile of ashes in a vacant lot strewn with refuse. His hands seemed to be buried in the ashes, which he imagined to be still warm. He glanced up at the cold stars that appeared to stare down in wonder at the ragged form huddled there amid the refuse of a spent life. He smiled back at them. . . And then it dawned upon him that he was dying . . . there . . . *on an ash heap!*

He strove to rise. But he could not move. He became terribly frightened. Then he relaxed. "I have no quarrel with death," he murmured. And he laughed feebly.

The sound of his voice startled him. It was so unnatural. "I'm dying!" he gasped. And then he seemed to muse wonderingly. "There will be no funeral, no singing of doleful tunes, no weeping, no hypocritical eulogy, no false testimony. They are part of the false, rotten, dangerous life that I am leaving. I'm glad to leave them . . . glad. . . But if I could I'd leave a message for the people of Crestelridge: 'Here lies one who missed the mark. And, oh, fools that you are! you are missing it, too!'"

He looked up again at the stars. "Oh, my God," he cried

hoarsely, "you gave me a chance . . . but I blew it! I'm not blaming you . . . nor Marian. If I live again after death it will probably be a far worse sense of life than this, for I have profited nothing . . . nothing! . . . But I'll face it like a man! . . . I'm leaving my cowardice behind. . ."

He was no longer cold, but deliciously warm. He had not been so warm in weeks. But his thought was drifting . . . drifting. He seemed to see a battlefield. He saw his former valet. And Boots was burying the mangled form of a traitor just executed. And the traitor was himself. A remnant of his old-time spirit of levity seemed to return upon him, and he found himself scribbling a doggerel epitaph for the rude cross over the grave:

Ted Sayor funked it; now he's gone west;
Nobody grieves that he lies at rest;
And whence he came and whither he goes,
Nobody cares and nobody knows. . .

And then he roused again out of his dreaming. The frozen stars still glittered above him. "I'll wait . . . here," he murmured, as his thought again wandered, "till Marian comes. What was it she said . . . at Cragg's party? . . . the Bible promises *are* kept . . . as ye reap . . . as ye reap. . . But I've done one decent thing in life, Marian. . . I've loved a good woman . . . you. . . Maybe that is the remnant . . . the remnant . . . that will . . . save. . ."

* * * * * * * *

In the frosty light of the early morning a teamster saw the body lying on a mound of frozen ashes. It too was frozen stiff. But there was a smile on the cavernous face, and the arms were outstretched. Perhaps, in his dreams beyond the threshold of death, Ted saw a great ship breasting the wintry waves far out at sea and coming toward him, that ship in whose passenger list was the name of Marian Whittier.

CHAPTER 12

THERE were those—idealists, they believed themselves—who had become bemused with the hope that in the hush of the "Big Berthas" would be heard the peace notes of the dove, ushering in a new heaven of ease in matter on a chastened earth, an era of "Business As Usual", an approximate return to the materialism which constituted their concept of normalcy.

But a sore disappointment awaited them as they turned their gaze from the terrors and agonies of the battlefields. In their material blindness they had misinterpreted the signs of the times. They did not realize that only a single phase of Armageddon had closed; that the warfare between good and evil is as continuous as the human concept of the material universe; and that, material weapons having failed, error had merely dropped them for the subtler forces of aggressive mental suggestion, while the lion still bared his teeth to the lamb.

The frightened world had roared never so lustily in patriotic fervor to exorcise the demons, for it had been upheaved as never before—upheaved till its frozen crusts of dogma had bent and cracked. Its heaven had been shaken, its sea, and its dry land. Nations had been shaken and beaten and burned in a chemicalization never so furious. The muddy stream of human thinking had been stirred to its oozy bed. Yet when the hammer again fell and the smoke of conflict cleared away, it was not the dove of peace but the fiends of error that flew over the earth, and that in a very riot of evil.

All that was best in human nature had been brought to the surface by the fearful upheaval; but likewise all that was worst. And when hostilities ceased, it was utterly impossible that these variant elements should lie down together to the cooing of the dove. For the dove is that exact, scientific and demonstrable knowledge of God which the world by Jesus' time had lost, which in the Emperor Constantine's day was exchanged to the politicians for a mess of theological pottage and again lost; and which to-day, rising once more to the surface of human consciousness through the thick strata of materiality, is again being bargained for, under animal magnetism's subtle dictation, for the pottage of "Who shall be greatest?" in the unreal realm of mortal mind.

In the midst of the post-war stir Marian Whittier left the Old World and returned to the New. In the midst of the tremendous overturning and chemicalization being wrought by the leaven of Truth, she turned from the misery, the desolation, the material ruin and moral filth of Europe to face their mordant contrast as externalized in the vulgar material display, the sobbing gayety, the animal greed and insane profiteering, the mortally ignorant struggle for power and prestige in darkened Crestelridge. In Crestelridge, as in the world without, class still clashed violently with class; sex with sex; impurity with purity; appetite with temperance; lust with knowledge; matter with mind. Politics, religion, medicine, science, all rose in the great upheaval and burst into furious ebullition. Disease raged; the Spanish influenza mocked faith and medicine; religion

languished behind closed church doors; while folly pirouetted to the hurdy-gurdy of mental illusion. The siren whistle that summoned the people at midday to prayer had symbolized the shortening of the Lord's arm and the complete loss of spiritual power. Fear sat brooding upon the mind of man, and hatched therein a thousand devils. Marian faced it, and her manner of facing it was a prophecy.

She knew nothing of events in Crestelridge since her departure, months before, although Simeon Penberry had hinted vaguely at strange "happenings" there. And in Madam Galuth's brief cabled message she had found no hint of Alden's need—but she was certain that it was humanly great. And she was just as certain that the demand for her work was so great, so imperative, that every human inhibition must be previously searched out and removed. She had worked it all out on her homeward journey: she would not have the thought of Crestelridge directed to her, for thoughts, she had long since learned, were indeed "things", and Crestelridge thought was material obstruction. In view of the vast task which she was certain awaited her, she must avoid arousing it and drawing it upon her. "You must remain for the present in New York City," she told Barach shortly before their boat docked. "I will send you instructions there, and you must run no risk of being recognized." Then, once more on her native soil, she entered Crestelridge in the depths of night, closely veiled, and went at once and unrecognized to the home of Madam Galuth.

Out over the desert of human thought, with its bleaching bones of dead hopes, Marian looked as, the tender greetings over, she listened to Madam Galuth. And she looked undismayed. "I bring you good news," she murmured, even while the desperate situation as mortal mind believed it to exist was being outlined before her—even while that which had in human consciousness occurred during her absence to the Craggs, the Whittiers, Ted Sayor, the Chaddocks was being revealed. "I bring you good news," she repeated: "the news that God is Good."

"I tell you these things, Marian," the white-haired woman said tenderly, "not that they are real, but that they constitute the false claim which error has set up here in human consciousness as the god which it would force us to worship."

"We will not bow down before it," declared the girl. "Evil is *not* power. It does *not* possess Alden. The Roake ideas shall *not* destroy him."

"The demand upon us," the woman continued, "is the same that is upon the world to-day. The hour for real thinkers has struck. Nothing short of right thinking can save the world. Nothing else can help Alden."

"But Alden surely has learned to think right!" the girl exclaimed.

"Yes," was the answer; "and yet he appears to complicate his own problem. He does not ask to be saved from meeting the test. He is facing death unafraid. He appears to possess a strange confidence, a consciousness of mastery over death. Perhaps he can overcome it. I am not hindering him by holding fear-thoughts over him. But—and you can tell me—has he taken all the intermediate steps which lead up to such a stupendous demonstration? The Master, you know, overcame death for others before he overcame it for himself. And he bade us do his great works—but he also bade us be wise. Is Alden manifesting wisdom now, or an unwise zeal?"

"And yet he cannot escape the test, can he?"

"But he has not really tried. For I am sure he knows who it was that error used as a tool to slay Harris."

Marian sprang up. "But there is nothing hid that shall not be revealed!" she cried.

"But if revealed, then that one who committed the deed will have to meet death. In either case, death must be met."

"Oh!" And Marian sank down again. "Then he is shielding someone?"

"It appears so. And he has said to me—though to no one else—that he is far better prepared to meet it than the one who shot Harris. . . Ah, Marian dear, *that* seems to be our problem! Alden, great soul that he is! goes forth willingly, gladly, to meet death for one whom he believes wholly unprepared to grapple with it, or to die."

She gave the girl pause for reflection; then she bent toward her. "Marian," she said, "I think Alden went into the shadow of death in Palestine, did he not?"

The girl looked up at her quickly, searchingly. "Yes," she answered low.

"And he was called back?" the woman pursued.

"Yes."

"I believe Alden must first overcome death for others before he can meet it for himself. . . Or did he meet it for himself in Palestine?"

"He was not prepared then, and I . . ." Marian checked her words and sat back.

The woman nodded understandingly. "That is why I sent for you," she said gently.

Again Marian seemed to stand at the Red Sea, with Egyptian darkness closing about her. Again, as always, did the mesmerism of self-pity loose its lethal fumes upon her. Had she, like the children of Israel, believed in the reality of evil, like

them she would have found her forward path blocked by the externalization of this false belief. Yet she listened to the voice that came through the Hebrew lawgiver: "Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord. . ." And she battled back the hosts of aggressive mental suggestion and faced the dark waters, knowing that they must part. The revealing of error's awful work during her absence from Crestelridge, culminating in Alden's plight, had, despite her struggles, seemed at first to benumb her mental activity with the shock of false belief. Yet it was only because of its shocking claim to be true, when she knew it was demonstrably Truth's antithesis. And at that period of human history error was seemingly accomplishing much by its subtle shocks, in sudden deaths and the paralyzing of human activity.

But it should not, could not, shock her into inertia. She had traveled far enough on the road of spiritual progress to know that the only barriers mankind have to deal with are their own stubborn beliefs of barriers and obstacles. She roused and turned to the woman. "It is an opportunity," she said—though as she spoke her ears seemed to din with error's awful mockery: *"Alden's death is but a few days off; nothing can save him now!"*

But the great fact was that Alden was already saved, though the testimony of sense deny it quite! And that was cause for exceeding joy. "Oh," she cried, springing up, "we must rejoice that we *know!* Go, tell Alden to rejoice! What though the world seem drowning in evil and woe? It is only the human consciousness of chaos. And it is only the materialist who fears. It is only human concepts that have been overwhelmed. The world-situation to-day is utterly unreal, for it is without Principle. Therefore it is not an occasion for dismay, but for great rejoicing. Error is submerging itself. The great upheaval is cause for boundless gratitude to the true Christian, for it proves, not that God is absent, as the materialists cry, but that He is so closely present that He is causing the enslaving beliefs of mankind to destroy themselves. Oh, we must rejoice, for there is nothing in the whole universe to cause a moment's dismay! Error falsely claims a world destroyed by war, civilization destroyed, Christianity dead, crime rampant, death supreme—but we, you and I, know better! It is for us to reverse all this false testimony, reverse it and see its vanity, its nothingness. We can meet the unprincipled situation by knowing the absolute truth about it. Time is not a factor in proving God. . ."

Day dawned as they stood together facing error. "We will not listen to the aggressive mental suggestions of evil," the girl

declared again and again. "By not giving them ear, they die."

And then: "The first step has been revealed to us," she said. "I want to meet Doctor Rowley, whom you have mentioned. I want him and Doctor Benson to come here at once. But no one else in Crestelridge must know that I have come back. I must not have the people's thought on me. I will keep to the house. . ."

"And Alden?"

"He must not know that I have returned. He is standing alone with his God. There must be no human personality for him to lean on. He and I are both prisoners now, prisoners of the Lord. We were prisoners together in Palestine. The human sense of circumstances and the diabolism directed against Alden have seemed to overwhelm him. But so they did Peter, and he too was thrust into jail. But an angel came to Peter—it was an idea of spiritual power, a thought divine. And by it he worked out his freedom. So to Alden and to me will come angels that will deliver us."

CHAPTER 13

BEHIND drawn blinds Marian Whittier met with Doctors Benson and Rowley in close conference the following morning. She was in the full sweep of her mental activity now, and Madam Galuth, as she watched her and heard her words, paused often in amazement at the girl's great spiritual growth. Marian was the epitome of the gospel of work, her days spent in the temple, her nights on Olivet.

"I thank God that we *do* see what to do and that we *are* doing it," she had declared that morning. It had been a sleepless night for them both, yet the girl had entered upon the new day with a renewal of courage that was prophetic. "The command is to be strong and of good courage," she said, "for there isn't a thing material to be afraid of." Her courage in the midst of tribulation was the spiritual strength born of self-conquest.

For, despite the onrush of the dark hour when Alden Cragg must satisfy the crude human sense of justice for the slaying of Harris Chaddock, Marian was not stampeded. There would be no snatching away of his problem now. Nor would there be any paralysis of activity through fear. "It is by refusing to think fear-thoughts, and by standing on the fact of God's allness, that we shall win," she declared. "Standing there now, we have *already* won. And we must remember that we are deal-

ing with God alone, not with mortals, not with human personality. It is a trial of our understanding; but do not forget that it is also a trial of the error that has operated through those who would destroy Alden. And I *know* what the verdict will be."

The demand for severance from the mutations of time and sense was imperative. To yield to either meant disaster. Equally imperative was the necessity of an immediate and uncompromising realization of the availability of God as the sole Cause. Marian, in the light of past experience, had determined that *NOW* was the time for the operation of Principle in the dispelling of the errors in which Alden had seemingly become entangled. "For Alden certainly is loosed in heaven—reality," she argued. "Therefore he is loosed on earth, where heaven is counterfeited and error is but the suppositional opposite of spiritual power."

"I am without a maid now," Madam Galuth had explained, when Marian discovered her preparing breakfast. "It is a fortunate misfortune, for there will be no tale-bearer to divulge your presence here. When the medical authorities persecuted me, my maid took fright and fled."

"But I shall be your maid," Marian declared. "I am used to persecution."

"Dear child," the woman murmured, "Satan has driven you into the wilderness with me."

Marian smiled. "I too am an exile," she said. And then she suddenly fell silent and stood looking searchingly at the woman. "Why," she resumed at length, and speaking in a voice tinged with wonder, "that is your name, isn't it? For the word *'galuth'* in the Hebrew tongue means *'exile'*. I wonder that I never thought of it before." And again she paused and regarded the woman strangely.

Madam Galuth started slightly under the girl's words, but quickly recovered and forced a little laugh. "Exiles we are, dearie," she said gently. "And Hebrews, children of Abraham, demonstrating Israel, the spiritual Man."

She said no more. And Marian's thought was soon diverted by the arrival of Doctors Benson and Rowley in response to the woman's early summons.

Doctor Benson welcomed her in amazement, and with a great, gasping sigh. Doctor Rowley looked long, earnestly, eagerly into her face as he listened to her broach the reasons for their summons. She spent few words. And when she had stated her problem in a preliminary way they both bowed and stood to await instructions.

"And now," she said abruptly, "do you believe that what we wish to accomplish is possible?"

"I do not," Doctor Benson vehemently declared.

"Then I shall have to dismiss you," said the girl. "I can have only those associated with me whose work will not be negatived by their own doubt."

"But you ask me to believe the impossible!" he protested.

"No, I am asking you to *stop* believing the impossible. Oh, I know, you and all mankind are like the White Queen who declared to Alice that she sometimes believed as many as six impossible things before breakfast. It is these impossible beliefs that I am asking you to get rid of."

"Don't dismiss me," he pleaded, seizing her hand. "I . . . why, I consider this the only *real* opportunity I've ever had! But we can't storm the jail . . . and the time is so short. . . Cragg's death is . . ."

"Stop!" she commanded sharply. "But for the mortal belief in material obstacles and time, there would be no death."

"No death, eh?" He would have argued the point.

She sat down and bade them draw up chairs. "We are banding together now to meet the false claim of death," she went on quietly. "Death appears to command the situation here. It claims Alden Cragg. And you have yielded dominion to it. Now the *truth* about the situation is all that can possibly have dominion over it. But we cannot correct this situation until we have referred it to the Principle of all that is real. That Principle is Mind, God."

"But, my dear girl," Benson interrupted petulantly, "this is no time for theorizing! Every minute counts now! I respect your deep religious bent, but we can't afford to waste time discussing the nature of God. . ."

"Listen," she said: "if a man named Smith had given you all you possess; if he fed, clothed, sheltered you; if he sustained you; if he was your very life; and if without him you would instantly cease to be, would not the name of Smith be on your tongue constantly? Would you not refer everything to Smith? Would you not take your every problem to him? Indeed, would you even *think* without measuring your every thought by his? Well . . ."

"Miss Whittier is right," Doctor Rowley put in. "I have talked with Alden Cragg. I know something of this way of thinking. The world has never been able to solve its problems on the basis of the reality of evil."

"Evil is negation," said Marian. "It is vague, illusive, not subject to the law of God, for there is nothing in it to respond to law. Now we are called on to analyze a situation here in Crestelridge. And the situation appears to be a mixture of both good and evil, with evil greatly predominating. It is a prob-

lem. How can we solve it? By applying Truth to it. Evil will then be forced to the surface and will pass off. The good will remain. And the problem will be found solved. But, first, we must get the problem correctly stated. All that is hidden shall be brought to light, for the one Mind will reveal it. Now, Doctor Rowley, as preliminary, tell us about your talks with Alden. After that, Doctor Benson will tell of his experience with . . ."

"Roake, eh?" Benson put in.

"No," Marian corrected, "but Fay Meuse."

"Eh? You suspect *her?* But it has been proved that she was out of town at the time of the shooting."

"I did not say that she committed the crime, Doctor. But the thought comes to me that I should see her. And, working under divine law, I respect every thought that comes, for these thoughts are 'angels'. I think Fay Meuse will return to Crestelridge—if she has not already done so. I want you to locate her at once, to-day. . ."

"Impossible!"

"I shall have to call you the White Queen, for you have already voiced two impossible things that you believe. Better get rid of the other four now, for I am going to assign you another task, that of discovering what became of Ted Sayor."

"Why, I can't . . ."

"Good! Now you have only three impossible beliefs left!" Marian exclaimed. And Doctor Benson sat back in confusion.

Then Marian turned again to Doctor Rowley. "Tell us anything you can," she urged.

"I certainly will give you whatever assistance I can toward helping Mr. Cragg. . ."

She interrupted him. "But let us again try to understand why we have come together to-day. I want you to see that it is to meet and begin the destruction of those human beliefs which have seemingly entangled not only Alden Cragg but thousands of others. Alden had apparently been caught by the religio-medical forces that have their center here in Crestelridge. It is those false thought-forces that we are to challenge and bring to trial. Their overthrow will manifest in his release. For it is they that would slay Alden Cragg. It was they that slew Harris Chaddock."

"Good heavens!" cried Doctor Benson, half rising from his chair, "I don't know that I follow you, but you seem to be aiming at the Roake plan!"

"I think that is what Madam Galuth called it," she answered. "But I understand it is to be given a new name."

"Yes, in his health-council," Doctor Rowley replied, puzzled, but greatly marveling.

"Health-council! Humph!" snorted Doctor Benson. "It's a political convention, nothing else!"

"And when does that convention meet?" she asked.

"In two weeks . . . here, in Crestelridge," Benson offered eagerly. "But why?"

"It is fortunate, for it gives us the opportunity to carry the warfare into the enemy's territory," she said, smiling.

"But . . . why, it's impossible!" cried Benson, aghast. "It can't be done!"

"Four," Marian counted. "My White Queen has but two impossibilities left. And I am sure we will soon be rid of those. And now, hear me: you doctors are to be sent to the convention like knights to the lists. You may take with you all others whom you can persuade. You are to meet Doctor Roake . . ."

"Good Lord, young woman!" Benson again exploded. "Do you realize what you are saying? Why . . . why, my God! it's utterly impossible . . ."

"Five," Marian smilingly checked off.

Doctor Benson sat down heavily in his chair, puffing hard. "Do you mean to say," he sputtered, "that you will calmly let Alden Cragg go to his death while you throw pebbles at Roake's convention? Excuse me for saying it, but Crestelridge has always considered you erratic."

"And yet, viewed in the light of Truth, it is poor, erroneous Crestelridge that is erratically off the right course," she gently answered him. "And as for throwing pebbles at the convention, if they are the 'five smooth stones' which David chose from the river of Truth, and if they are hurled with the sling of faith at the Goliath of belief of life and intelligence in matter, the mesmerism wielded by the 'one lie' will be destroyed and the giant will come clattering to the ground."

"I think I understand you, at least in part," said Doctor Rowley thoughtfully. "I have no doubt my talks with Alden Cragg were a preparation for this. You believe that it was the ideas embodied in the Roake plan that really caused, or culminated in, Doctor Harris Chaddock's death—is that it? And it is those ideas that you would meet."

"That I would meet and expose," she said. "To expose them is to give them their death-blow. It is the general idea behind the Roake plan that is the real criminal, and not the human being who, as its tool, shot Harris."

"You would publicly fight Roake?" Doctor Benson demanded. "Then I'll be excused!"

"No," Marian corrected, "I would not fight against human personality. I have no quarrel with Doctor Roake. But his organization is founded upon human ideas that are false and

murderous. It is those ideas that I would have arrested, brought to trial, and condemned."

"A unique conception, certainly," declared Doctor Rowley. "And yet there appears to be no other way of accomplishing anything."

"But . . . why, it's the same thing that Cragg proposed," sputtered Benson. "He said the evil could be made to commit suicide. But . . . Good Lord! how can such a thing be done? And it can't be done before he goes to his death!"

"That is the sixth impossibility that you have believed, Doctor," Marian answered. "Now that you have gotten rid of them all, you should be ready for your work. Our warfare is like Paul's, against wickedness in high places. The more powerful and malignant the evil seems, the closer it is to its destruction. And either God has called us to the work of destroying this evil here, or He has not. If He has, then He will sustain us in the work and will give us the victory. If you think He has not, then you must decline to become associated with me in it. But your decision must be immediate."

Doctor Rowley sprang to his feet and extended his hand. Doctor Benson sat staring blankly at her for a moment, then slowly rose and took her outstretched hand. She turned her head for a moment to hide her tears. Then she bade them be seated again for the hours of earnest conversation that were to follow.

CHAPTER 14

"SPIRITUAL dynamite!" was Doctor Benson's concise summation of Marian Whittier's character as manifested now in her diverse hidden activities. "But to ask us to meet Roake, in his own convention! . . . Rowley, it's a political convention, this health-council of Roake's! It's nothing on earth but a gathering of political doctors to nationalize medicine, and along the Roake lines! What in heaven's name can a girl like Marian Whittier do toward upsetting it? What can we do, you and I? And what good is all this going to do young Cragg, who sits there with the shadow of death creeping closer? And how on earth can I find Ted Sayor and Fay Meuse? . . ."

The door of his office opened as he spoke and a young man, clad in the uniform of an American soldier, entered hesitatingly. Doctor Benson rose to receive him, surprise written large in his face.

"Beg pardon, sir, but you are Doctor Benson? Thank you,

sir. I came to inquire for Mr. Ted Sayor, sir. I was his valet, before I went to war. . ."

Doctor Benson exclaimed. "Lord above! . . . What's your name?"

"He called me Boots, sir. If you will please tell him that Boots is trying to locate him, and no offense meant, sir, it would be a favor."

"But we're looking for him, too!" gasped Benson. "How did you happen to come *here?*"

"Doctor Roake sent me."

Doctor Rowley sprang to his feet. Benson fell back in speechless amazement.

"After Mr. Ted left the cabaret where he was playing the piano I tried to locate him. He had told me he had been working for Doctor Roake, so I went there. The doctor, sir, was much interested in hearing about my meeting with Mr. Ted in the cabaret, and he said as how he had learned that Mr. Ted had been in consultation with you. . ."

Another exclamation escaped Benson at this. "He's had his spies watching me, the canny rascal! This is his method of telling us that he's onto our game! . . . But, sit down here, Boots. . . Egad! the Lord probably sent you. Everything's from the Lord these days! Now what's this about Ted Sayor's playing the piano in a cabaret?"

With the idea single of service to his beloved master, Boots told his story simply and directly. And when he finished, the tears were dropping from Benson's bronzed cheeks. "Boots," said the great-hearted doctor, and his words came brokenly, "we must find him. God grant that it isn't too late! But the work cut out for you is, I believe, much greater than you imagine. You . . . you've been sent to us. I believe that girl up on the hill . . . But never mind that. Now we haven't a minute to lose! And it's got to be done quietly, Boots, and in the dark. There is a woman I want you to find for us—it may mean the saving of a life. You're working for Ted Sayor while you try to locate her. Understand? Every dive, every brothel, every cabaret, theater, rooming house in the city must be searched, Boots, and you've got to do it. But lives, many of them I now believe, are at stake. . ."

That night Boots crept through the cover of darkness to Madam Galuth's home and gave his allegiance to the little band working under the direction of Marian Whittier. Then he set forth on his quest.

"There is nothing hid that shall not be revealed," Marian repeated to the others after he had left. "Doctor Roake may have sent Boots to you, Doctor Benson, as a warning, or merely

as a morbid joke. But remember that error when bloated with its sense of triumph always overreaches. And in this case I think it has already done so."

There were now such activities forward as to keep the girl and her associates borrowing heavily from the night. Marian never left the house, but frequent communications went from her to David Barach, and by him were cabled to Simeon Penberry, who thereupon set his numerous agents and barristers to work, and swore roundly as he did so that a day of reckoning was at hand for those who had sought to outwit him. The Penberry wealth was drawn upon without stint by Marian; Barach was instructed to engage the cleverest of counsel and to spare no expense. Marian was in turn bidden by Penberry to remember that the product of the greatest mines on the Rand was at her disposal. The David who went out to meet Goliath was indeed possessed of potentialities invisible to the boasting enemy.

It is possible—nay, probable—that Doctor Roake sensed the loosing of forces opposed to his own, though he could not know whence they emanated. Certain it was that, with the convention but two weeks off, he felt a vague uneasiness, a mental disturbance not assignable to any definitely perceived cause. Boots had not returned to him, and appeared to have been engulfed in the sea of humanity comprising Greater New York and its environs. But the doctor had not bidden him return. He was sorry now that he had not. And yet he could not say why he should be.

The uneasiness increased, despite the fact that the preparations for the convention were going forward satisfactorily, and the interest manifested was even greater than had been anticipated. He wondered if Alden Cragg's inactivity was less real than apparent. Yet what could Alden do? But to satisfy himself he visited the condemned man again, as he had frequently done before, ostensibly to offer his services in whatever capacity possible, to console, and to animate with courage.

But again, as always before, he had to meet a sense of disappointment in not finding Alden cowering before the approach of death. What the astute doctor could not know was that Alden had agreed with his adversary quickly, whiles in the way with him. The occasion which, to the doctor's manner of thinking, should have been fraught with terror, actually appeared to be accepted by Alden as one of rejoicing. But Alden had agreed with the spiritual fact. And that fact was the present Reality, unperceived by human sense which attributes power to evil.

"Alden," the doctor said very kindly, "as I have repeatedly

told you, I was surprised that you did not set up a plea of insanity. Not that it could have been established on your conduct since your return from the war, but, rather, on what occurred to you over there—shall we say, in Palestine? But it is not too late now. Something *did* occur to you over there that you have been reluctant to mention. Why? But even now, as a last resort, we may avail ourselves of it if you will but tell me what it was. Let me put it this way: the experience which you had over there was sharp enough to whiten your hair. It therefore must have produced a shock sufficient to disturb your mentality. You returned greatly changed. With the facts in my possession, I could go to the governor, secure a stay of execution, and get the case reviewed by the Supreme Court, with the undoubted result that you would escape the chair and be sent to an asylum. Tell me, Alden, for your dead mother's sake, if not for your own—for the sake of our dear rector, who is eating his heart out over the terrible tragedy—tell me what happened to you over there."

Alden steadily returned the doctor's searching look. "You are not concerned with my experience over there," he said, "but merely in the warning that came from it. And you know what that warning is, for you heard me speak to the people of St. Jude's."

"But on what do you base that warning?" the doctor persisted.

"Death," was the low reply.

"Death!" The doctor started. "But whose? Marian Whittier's? Is that why she has dropped out of sight? Tell me, Alden, where she died and under what circumstances. Listen," his manner was unwontedly eager, "if you will give me proofs of her death . . ."

"She is not dead."

"No? Then where is she?"

"I do not know. I left her in Jerusalem. She went from there into Persia. I have learned nothing further."

"Persia! Why there? And with whom?"

"I do not think it wise to tell you."

A shade crossed the doctor's face. Marian in Persia! And on what mission? His manner became conciliatory. "But why, Alden?" he pleaded. "I have been your life-long friend."

Alden shook his head. "You have been evil's friend, not mine."

"Alden! You amaze me! Surely you do not mean to imply that my marriage with Ethel . . ."

"Oh, no. I had no claim to Ethel. I did not oppose her divorce. I would not have opposed her marriage with you."

The doctor controlled himself with an effort. "You imply that I have been in error. If so, I earnestly wish to correct it. I have talked often with Marian Whittier. I have learned much from her that is helpful. If you have anything from her now, why withhold it from me?"

Alden regarded the doctor long and steadily. Then he drew a deep sigh. "I cannot help you," he said sadly, "until you honestly desire help. Hypocrisy has so enchained you that nothing but a tremendous experience can set you free. When you cease to deceive others, you may see how terribly error has deceived you."

"Deceive others! . . . Alden, under the circumstances I must overlook your harsh judgment. While I may need help, as all mortals do, still *you* are in desperate need, for you are facing certain death."

"And what is death that you should fear it so?" Alden asked.

"I . . . why, it is for *you* that I fear. . . Alden, you surely don't hold yourself above death!"

"But we are bidden to do so, and to render it nothing."

The doctor stared at him. "And you . . . you are standing on that?"

"Yes. We who call ourselves Christians must begin to obey the Master sometime and keep his sayings. Why not begin now?"

The doctor shook his head. "You are deceiving yourself," he said. "Fear of death has rendered your faculties numb. My large experience enables me to detect it. Your status now is the same as that of tubercular patients, who, confronted with certain death, become so paralyzed with fear that they manifest an utterly false courage."

"I do not fear," Alden replied calmly. "I die daily. But you are greatly fearing now. And you do not know what it is that you fear."

"Ah, and what then do you believe I fear?"

"Death. And well you may fear it, for it is upon you."

"What do you mean by that?" the doctor demanded sharply.

"Go," said Alden, "and ponder it. Until you have learned its meaning, do not come here again."

The doctor's face went white. "But if I go, your fate is sealed!" he exclaimed hotly. "I have come offering you life, but you are choosing death! A horrible death! And it is but two weeks off!"

"And I have offered you heaven, but you have chosen hell. And it is upon you now."

The doctor held to his poise and forced a smile. His manner

appeared to soften, and he spoke low and gently. "This is no talk for gentlemen," he deprecated, "and for old friends. It is no talk for such a solemn hour as this. The tenseness of the situation has affected us both. Come, Alden, once more: will you tell me of your climacteric experience in Europe? Will you tell me what part Marian played in it? And then will you aid me in making that experience a new plea for your life?" He drew nearer. "Alden," he urged, "it *can* be done. Without any question whatever you can be proved insane, and so escape the chair."

"There is but one Mind, God," came the answer. "I reflect it. I am therefore not insane. My deliverance is not a function of lies, but of Truth. Your interest is not in me, but in Marian Whittier, for to her has come Truth that shall sweep away the refuge of lies. And for that reason you fear."

Yet would Doctor Roake not yield his determination to move heaven and earth to locate Marian Whittier. And for that reason, despite the stern judgment meted out by Alden Cragg, he maintained his poise, nor did his manner lose one jot of its wonted urbanity, nor his voice a shade of its deep solicitude. In his heart he believed Alden mildly insane, else would the youth not rejoice so unreasonably in the approach of death, nor would he manifest such unwarranted conviction of his ability to meet it. That he had utterly misinterpreted Alden's conduct had not occurred to him. And while he knew that Alden would go to the chair—while he grimly determined that he should—yet the conviction grew hourly upon him that all was not well; that forces *had* been loosed upon him, through Alden, through Marian Whittier, possibly through the Galuth; that in some manner they had to do with Otto Hoeffel, with Simeon Penberry, with . . . But he *must* find Marian! And as he turned to the task he wondered if Ted Sayor, with the fangs of death fastened in his wasted frame, would reappear! . . .

CHAPTER 15

BECAUSE of the proximity of the great religio-medical convention called by Doctor Roake, Crestelridge was now on the tip-toe of expectancy. But its eagerness was mingled with apprehension. Society's nerves had been held so long taut that any loosening of the tension must certainly cause it to fly to pieces. It was even thus early peering anxiously beyond the convention and the execution of Alden Cragg for promise of fresh sensation to maintain the unhealthful stimulus of its diseased ganglia.

"Henry says that Doctor Roake has put Crestelridge on the map," Mrs. Tellus declared, "and that the convention will make this *the* religious and medical center of the world. Think of it! It will mean a lot to Henry's business."

The Culture Club was in session at the rectory, Mrs. Whittier presiding. And as this excellent lady smiled her acknowledgment of Mrs. Tellus' observation she mentally thanked her stars that Doctor Roake had seen fit to take Ethel to wife. For thereby had the Whittier prestige been saved from dire catastrophe, and Mrs. Whittier and Ethel furnished with a masculine support of the highest order that rendered dependence upon the fragile rector no longer necessary.

And yet not alone thereby had the Whittier prestige been saved, for acknowledgment must be made to an indubitable influence arising from the altered complexion of Crestelridge society, an influence which operated greatly in Mrs. Whittier's favor. The visitation of Spanish influenza had left society's ranks depleted. The Kerls, the Blacks, the Nences, and scores of others in mourning were now deriving solace, not from a return to their former social gayety, but from ouija boards and the prophetic cards, and from seeking unto spiritualistic mediums who peeped and muttered and delivered to them, in shrouded rooms and in exchange for much good gold, weird messages from their beloved dead. Thus had those who had withdrawn from St. Jude's because of the shocking scandal surrounding Harris Chaddock's murder likewise been forced out of society for a period sufficient to enable Mrs. Whittier to gather up the reins which had been jerked from her hands and seat herself again securely. "They simply got what they deserved for trying to dish St. Jude's," was the lady's logical conclusion. "And I'm glad to be rid of them." Those remaining were more tractable.

Nor can another contributing factor be ignored, namely, the great influx into Crestelridge's social ranks of those newly made rich by the time's unexampled opportunities. The Lahertys, the McBeans, and the other ambitious constituents of the new crop of millionaires now knocking at society's doors, were only too ready to acknowledge Mrs. Whittier's leadership, as they were to become communicants of St. Jude's, provided they be recognized and accorded the privileges of the financially great. Add now to this the splendid functions being given at "Craggmont" by Doctor Roake and Mrs. Whittier, acting for the doctor's invalided wife, and the continued social leadership of Mrs. Whittier can be readily understood.

"I have asked Mrs. Laherty to attend with me the sessions of the convention that are to be open to women," Mrs. Whit-

tier remarked to Mrs. Tellus. "Don't you think the Lahertys and McBeans are charming? We had them over to 'Craggmont' to dinner last evening. They are immensely wealthy. And they know how to spend their money. I drove to Christler's with Mrs. Laherty yesterday morning for some shopping, and, upon my word, she wouldn't look at a thing priced under $500! But, the dear thing!—I was *so* amused—when she came to buy furniture for her new home she got the periods absurdly mixed up. Her face was a blank when the salesperson asked her whether she wanted Louis XIII or XIV. I suggested Louis Quinze, and she said she didn't want anything to remind her of canned goods, for those days, she hoped, were past. Wasn't that lovely? She wouldn't look at a suite of furniture under $5,000, and every bit of it had to be gilded. And she just insisted on filling her house with a regular conglomeration of stuff, but all terribly expensive. She told me she got her ideas of house decoration from moving picture 'sets' that she's seen on the screen. Isn't she ingenuous? I shall propose her name this afternoon for membership in the Culture Club. What do you say?"

Yet there was no gainsaying that the Lahertys and McBeans were as competent to discuss the topics before the Culture Club as the Whittiers and Telluses, and particularly the subject set for review on this afternoon, which was the appropriate one of "Self-determination." Doctor Roake had addressed the Club at its preceding session on the ponderous subject of "Psychoanalysis", and had propounded the startling theory that the primary impulse of human nature toward the world is not one of love, but of hate. The doctor had handled his abstruse theme in the manner of a surgical operation on the human soul. "We begin life with hatred, rather than with love," he had said. "It is an observation confirmed by intensive study of the human mind."

"But why not?" the metaphysician will ask. "For, since the human man is the direct opposite of the Man divine, why is it not logical that his pseudo existence should begin with the direct opposite of divine Love as its animus, namely, hate?"

But this deeper aspect of the subject had not occurred to Mrs. Whittier. It was rather that the doctor's statement conflicted with her own theory as exemplified in Ethel's bringing up. "We must allow children to be themselves," she insisted. "Then they will grow up as they should." But she did not amplify her premise by adding that she had had no other recourse with Ethel; that sensuality was the order of this new day, and that because of it few parents had the willingness to sacrifice even a moiety of their own pleasure for the moral

training of their offspring. "But children are sent to Sunday school to be trained," Mrs. Whittier had argued. "Ethel always went. And she has always been permitted the greatest degree of self-expression." Which certainly was true in respect to the girl's human self. For true expression is naught but reflection of the Mind divine—but at that Mrs. Whittier would have smiled sententiously.

"As an example of the result of interference with self-determination, we might cite unfortunate Alden Cragg," she went on. For Mrs. Whittier was determined to seize every occasion to prove to the world that Alden Cragg was no more to her now than any other unfortunate mortal, that his coming into her family had been a mistake—now happily corrected—and that he had long since passed out of her life forever, leaving her and her family no worse for the experience. His trial and condemnation had shocked her numb. The realization that he must meet death as a felon had filled her with a horror that would have kept her cowering behind drawn curtains, but for the prodding fear that such a course would constitute an acknowledgment of disgrace that would be fatal to her social prestige. "We have just made our place in society!" she wailed to Ethel. "And, until this horrible thing happened, it was secure!" She sought advice from Doctor Roake. And then, despite the protests of the stricken rector, she determined upon her present calloused conduct. "We've got to brazen it out," she told Ethel. "If we don't, we're lost!" As the dread event drew nearer she became morbidly obsessed with the thought of Alden's execution. And she knew that her society friends had become similarly affected, but that they were refraining from mentioning the subject out of delicate respect to her. This made her desperate, even heartless, in her constant reference to it.

"And yet," Mrs. Tellus observed, eagerly grasping the opportunity which Mrs. Whittier now offered her to discuss Alden, "when his mother's constant interference was removed, he changed completely."

Mrs. Whittier nodded, a bit hysterically. "He developed traits that had long been dormant." She liked the phrase. It had come from Doctor Roake. "You see," she continued, "when he went to the war he began, for the first time in his life, to express his real self. But at his age he simply didn't know how, and he went all to pieces and permitted his vicious traits to get the upper hand. There was much good in him, of course; but the evil predominated—so Doctor Roake explains it."

"Which of course made him dangerous to the social order," Mrs. Tellus deduced.

"Decidedly so, as you see. He should have been declared insane long before Ethel made her unfortunate marriage with him. Dear girl! she was *so* deceived. But she has risen above it—we all have. But Doctor Roake says he believes he is perfectly sane. But he can't be, or he wouldn't do as he . . ." She leaned toward Mrs. Tellus and whispered excitedly. "Doctor Roake says he believes Alden is really *glad* to go to the . . . to the . . . electric chair!" And she shuddered as she voiced the words.

"You don't mean it!"

"Yes. And that he looks upon it as a test of his religious theories, and expects to . . . But, my country! . . . it's too awful!"

"You mean that he expects to . . . *live* through it?"

"Yes, to actually overcome death . . . there . . . in the chair!"

"Horrible!" gasped Mrs. Tellus, tingling with delight over the unique prospect. "Why, he's mad! They ought not to permit it! It's . . . it's simply murder! It will be a shocking spectacle! Can't Doctor Roake stop it?"

"Nobody can stop it. The governor has refused to interfere. It is terrible! . . . But, after all, it may, as Doctor Roake says, contribute something of value to medical science. And . . . it is awfully interesting, considered in that light, isn't it?"

And Mrs. Tellus slowly nodded her agreement, amazed, awed, but knowing well that she would not have it otherwise for worlds.

The formal announcement of the early convening of the Roake organization in a sort of general health-council had set Crestelridge agog. It was a point of culmination of the Roake activities which had gradually brought about a frenzy of health-seeking along religio-medical lines. The subject was now on everyone's lips; it and Alden Cragg's approaching fate had become almost the sole themes at sessions of the Culture Club, the Norman Dames, in pulpits, and society functions. In particular did the injection of the religious element into the great plan arouse widespread interest and comment. "It's all right if they jest don't let th' preachers git too strong f'r 'em," observed McBean, newly elected to the International Club, and lounging now in its smoking room in an awkward attempt to appear at ease. "F'r th' preachers 'll mess everything if you give 'em enough rope. They'll make th' girls lower their skirts an' quit paintin' their legs an' wearin' hosettes. I'm thinkin' they've already got in their reform work on th' magazines. Look at this one; first time I ever seen it without a

pitcher of a girl on th' cover showin' her legs. Look at it! Jest a pitcher of a farm! Who in 'ell wants to see a farm on a magazine cover, eh?"

Error's most valued agents for the dissemination of its propaganda are always its own victims. The people of Crestelridge seized upon the program of the convention and sent it broadcast, with urgent invitations to their friends to visit the city and be their guests at that time. The heavy subject of "Self-determination" languished before the Culture Club that afternoon, while its members dwelt on the social advantages to accrue in the wake of the coming health-congress, and waited expectantly for an opportunity to discuss Alden Cragg. "Everybody'll be here!" exclaimed Mrs. Whittier, in further reference to the convention. "Ministers, doctors, professors, and prominent scientists from all over the country. There will be 'Mother days' and 'Father days' and 'Baby days' and . . . and . . . Oh, and Doctor Roake wants the Culture Club to hold one or two sessions in the auditorium during the convention. And he says we ought to discuss something appropriate. You know, we must show that we are strictly up to date."

"I suppose," volunteered one, "that we ought to discuss the negro problem, or the Japanese question."

"But we are a *culture* club!" was objected. "We must talk about something literary. Books or poetry . . ."

"The eighteenth or nineteenth century novels . . . what say?"

"Oh, dear!" rose a tender lament, "I haven't read one of them. What are they? And who wrote tnem?"

"I don't really know. But . . ."

"We'd make a bigger hit with free verse, don't you think?" Mrs. Tellus offered. "Have one of the modern poets come and recite and accompany himself with a mandolute or something. . . What a stunning hat that is, Emma! I just can't keep my eyes off it! Where on *earth* did you get it?"

"What's the convention program? That might help us to decide."

"Well, in general," Mrs. Whittier explained, "first, the welcome and the committee meetings, to get organized; then Doctor Roake really opens the convention with a clinic in the Municipal College of Medicine, in the city. He is going to demonstrate his new theory about tuberculosis. He's been making tests and studying the subject during the past few months and he's developed something new in the way of treatment. It's going to be the biggest surprise of the century."

"My!" in chorus.

"The women are debarred from the clinic, of course. He

has to talk over a dead body, you know. Ugh! Well, then among the doctors there will be an open forum on the subject of 'Doctors' and one on the subject of 'Healing'. Among the ministers there will be open forums on 'Fundamental Christianity', 'Theology', and 'The Bible'. Then there will be joint sessions, open to the public, for the discussion of 'Philosophy', including the subjects of 'Matter', 'Time', and so forth. Also open meetings to consider the 'Human Mind', and, finally, a forum on 'Hypnotism'. Wonderful selection of topics, isn't it? Sort of metaphysical. Doctor Roake made it himself. He has a bent toward the influence of the mind on the body, you know. Isn't it interesting?"

"Wonderful!" her auditors agreed unanimously.

"Now the idea of having the Culture Club hold sessions in the auditorium during the convention is to show the outsiders that we are intellectual here in Crestelridge . . ."

"Then I insist that we discuss free verse and the modern realist novels."

"I think we ought to throw in a little something about subversive philosophy. . ."

"What's that?" demanded Mrs. Tellus, her eyes still devouring Emma Newmonger's clamorous headgear.

"Why, we'll have to look it up. But it's very modern."

"But, in view of having so many ministers here, don't you think we ought to, in a manner, talk about the Bible, too?" someone timidly suggested.

"But what can we say about it? I've never even read it."

"Oh, let the preachers handle that," Mrs. Tellus settled the moot point. "It's their business, you know. Let's decide on free verse and adjourn. I want to try my new car."

In the offices of Doctor Roake a buzzing swarm carried forward the complicated preparations for the great event. An unbroken stream of humanity came and went throughout the day and far into the night. Among them at any hour might be seen the pathetic figure of Senator Chaddock, bent and broken, mumbling, always mumbling as he aimlessly paced through the halls, in and out of doors, or hovered about the sanctum of Doctor Roake and awaited his coming, that he might follow doggedly, and always mumbling, in his footsteps. "Why doesn't the doctor send the poor old fool to an asylum?" was a frequent query. And often it was answered with: "Out of the greatness of his heart he is caring for the old senator as if he were his brother." And sometimes there would be heard such comment as: "It is a singular and beautiful example of devotion on the doctor's part. He certainly is a good man."

And comment was frequently drawn from the callers at the Roake offices by the haggard appearance of the man directing the activities of the ministers in the organization, the Reverend Wilson Whittier. Visiting clergymen remarked on his apparent indifference, his lassitude, and the wistful, far-away look in his eyes. "He appears to have the sorrows of the world on his shoulders," was said. "Perhaps it is because of the high position which he is now occupying," said others. "His responsibility must be tremendous."

Which was true, for it was responsibility that was crushing him. But it was his responsibility to his God. And over it the wretched man was going mad.

It seemed impossible to him that things could have taken such a turn—and yet he knew not really what was wrong, nor yet wherein lay the cause of his soul-sickness. He knew only that it was sick, and sick unto death. . .

Death! That was it! And sin brought it! For "if a man keep my saying," said the sinless Master, "he shall never see death". . .

He was dying! He had known it long! God! if he but dared, he would himself hasten the end. . . For death was his much-belated guest. Could he but lie down and close his eyes, never again to open them, he would account himself blessed. He envied Alden Cragg—it was only the revolting mode of Alden's death that he shrank from. He minded not now the ineffaceable disgrace.

The swift approach of the day of execution horrified him. He could not hold his thought from it. And thought of it froze him. He had prayed that it would not take place in Crestelridge, that Alden would be removed to the city or to the state prison for the last horrible scene—for if it were done there, and if he were obliged to witness it, he knew he should become a raving, screaming, hell-torn maniac! . . .

The thought possessed him that Alden might request his presence in that last revolting hour, and because of his fear of it he had ceased his visits to the condemned man. It was cowardly, and . . . But there was a crumb of comfort in the fact that during his last visit to the youth he had begged forgiveness for whatever sorrow he might have caused him or his poor mother, had begged forgiveness for remissness, and for —Oh, he knew not what! but for unoutlined sins which he had perhaps unwittingly committed against the youth, against the mother, against the Cragg name. There was nothing definite—yet he did know that, in some manner, he was deeply peccable. "Alden, I may have done you a wrong," he had moaned; "but, if so, it was through ignorance! I trusted Doctor Roake. . . Of

course I don't mean to imply that he has done anything wrong, you understand. You will not quote me to that effect, will you? I consider the doctor . . . honorable . . . just . . . yes, yes, he must be a good man, yes! But we may . . . we both may have done you an injury through ignorance . . . I don't know . . . I don't know. . .

"Alden, I am convinced that you did not kill Harris deliberately. Doubtless you had the pistol. . . You quarreled, but he probably provoked it. . . The result was accidental. . . But your refusal to tell has left the State no other recourse than . . . Oh, if you would but confess your part in this terrible tragedy!"

The rector had heard the shocking rumor—had heard it first from Doctor Roake—that Alden welcomed death, welcomed it as a test! And the ghastly prospect gripped the horrified man and forced him to voice it to Alden.

"No," Alden told him, "I do not welcome it. But I do not shrink from it. If I must meet death, I shall do so knowing that there is no death."

"Alden! Your talk indicates an unsoundness of thought! Death is an awful reality!"

"Can death be real if God is infinite Life?" was the reply. "Do you not preach the infinitude of God? But you constantly show that God is wholly unreal to you. Yet to me He is Life itself."

"But . . . do you imagine . . . Alden, you have no such wild notion as that you can . . . can *overcome* death?"

"Of myself I can do nothing. But the infinite Principle, God, acting through me, can do all things, even to the overcoming of death. Why, then, should I quail? Is not the greatest need of the present hour the gaining of the knowledge that death may be overcome here and now—that it *must* be overcome, not with drugs and surgery, and not merely postponed, but *overcome*, as Jesus overcame it, with the exact and scientific knowledge of God? What is there that men are interested in to-day that is half so important as this knowledge? I came back from death, and I preached to my fellow men here in Crestelridge the importance of such knowledge. But in their mesmerism they cast me out. But if I can convince them by meeting death in the chair . . ."

"Alden!" gasped the near-crazed rector, as he fell away from him, "you are mad!"

"Mad to trust God? But are you not rather mad to preach a trust in Him that you do not manifest?"

"But to all men it is appointed once to die!" But the quotation was meaningless to the rector now.

"To mortal man it is appointed by error to die, not once,

but many times, until the error shall itself be slain that falsely claims a power opposed to God who is infinite Life. While mankind sin, they shall die. And sin is not conduct, but false thought entertained—the erroneous belief that there is life and substance and power in aught but God. It is the death-dealing belief that life and intelligence inhere in matter. . ."

Matter! It was the rector's *bête noir* of old!

"And matter," he heard Alden saying further, "is the only evidence before the mortal mind. Yet Jesus knew and proved it to be but a phenomenon of thought."

He felt Alden's arm steal about his shoulders as he sat with head bowed in his hands. "When I came across the ocean," he heard him say tenderly, "our ship sailed always toward the distant horizon, where sea appeared to meet sky. But we never reached it. We never crossed it. For the horizon is not a reality, but an illusion. To those on the shore we seemed to pass over it; yet we on the boat knew that we did not. So it is with death. For as the horizon marks the limits of human vision, so death is but the limitation of right thinking in mankind. It has no real existence. Perhaps I am now called to prove it."

The rector's thought swirled and seethed as he crept away from Alden's cell. One idea crystallized out and chilled the rest: Alden made nothing of death!—death, the most awful fact in life!

But the youth was mad, crazed with fear, calloused with horror, insane, else were his talk less irrational. . . But he would soon know . . . the hour of testing was at hand. . . Ah, the rector's own hour of testing was upon *him*, and he knew he was sinking!

His straining, blood-shot eyes seemed to envision things unreal as he slunk through the streets toward the rectory. He seemed possessed to see before him now the glittering little pistol which, during an epidemic of burglary there some years before, he had purchased to still his wife's fears. And as he gazed at it in space his ears rang with a hellish suggestion. His world had slipped . . . it had gone . . . he was himself dead . . . *dead!* Why pretend to live, when he knew he was but a lifeless lump, mere mud in the joints of the Roake edifice? Why stand to meet the frightful test of the Roake convention that was roaring down upon him like a devastating tornado? He could not meet it! It was not humanly possible to one now so helled about as he, so enmeshed, so inextricably entangled. . . It was not required of him: God—if there be God—could not in reason ask of frail mortals the impossible!

. . . and he had not wherewith to lean upon for support. . .

No, she would not return. . . Yet he had been minded often of late to go to the Galuth and demand to know if Marian were alive. And that might open the way. . .

What, ask the despised Galuth for help? It was Satan's last trick! No! Death first!

CHAPTER 16

AS he entered the rectory he encountered Mrs. Whittier in the vestibule, garishly attired for an "afternoon" and awaiting her car. "The McBeans have just telephoned," she announced, "asking us to dinner to-night, seven sharp. I accepted for you. There'll be some vaudeville and dancing. . ."

"I cannot go," he said in a shaking voice.

"Well, you *shall* go!" she returned decisively. "My country! You refused the Laherty's invitation yesterday. Are you trying to put me in bad with society? As if we hadn't had enough to meet! Run along now and take your bath. I'll meet you at the McBeans'. And," raising her lorgnette upon him, "for heaven's sake try to perk up a little! My country! You go 'round like an animated graveyard."

Nausea had seized upon him at this voicing of the woman's shallow sentiment, and he hurried out of her sickening presence. The McBeans! The Lahertys! They were leering, jeering, empty death-heads, all of them! And in his study the rector fell into his chair and hid his eyes with his hands to shut them out.

But was he better than they? Or farther advanced toward the Kingdom of Heaven? Pin-headed worldlings they were—but what did *he* know that outvalued their folly? Fool that he was! the moth that fluttered about his study lamp knew full as much of the essence of light as he; knew as much of the forces of Nature—doubtless more! Yet had he prated oft and learnedly of the *vis inertiae*, of cohesion, attraction, gravitation—and could demonstrate no more than the beetle that stormed his panes! He had lectured sagely on music, on love, on race, and sex—and had poured forth his mental rubbish to fools as wise as he, who had swelled him to bursting with their silly flattery! Osmosis, electrolysis, chemical affinity, force: he could debate with any professor, and get as far—which was nowhere! In his lifetime of study he had devoured learned tomes, authoritative text-books that became obsolete

even as he read, treatises that gave him the lie as he concluded one and opened another. Yet he had lectured on these learned speculations, and by them had again and again interpreted the universe to his unthinking audiences in terms of matter and force—only to be driven at last to the knowledge of both as illusions! That he might not lose caste, he had carried water on both shoulders—fool that he now realized himself to be!—for he who teaches that power dwells in forces of matter denies the very existence of God! He had sought to "popularize" science and religion, seeing not, in his dense blindness, the absurdity of attributing to a spiritual cause a material universe and its equally material phenomena; the destructive folly of clinging to God as Spirit and to earth as matter, with a no less solidly material heaven swinging somewhere above it!

He knew as he looked back now that not until Marian had challenged his shallow views had he questioned the legitimacy of orthodox Christianity. Sin, to him, had been ever a solid though lamentable fact. Evil was dreadfully real, and stubbornly opposed to God—nay, appearing generally to get the better of Him! Sickness, sorrow, and other forms of discord that render human life a drama of tears, he had sought to regard as modes of discipline imposed by God—and yet a God offended in dim Adamic days and bearing through the centuries an interminable grudge! The impossibility of wholly avoiding sin here had been fully demonstrated—he could only teach that, by earnest supplication to God and the saints, living and dead, and by attendance upon the prescriptions of organized religion, the worst sins might indeed be escaped. Likewise, by constant and sedulous attention to health, with the guidance of learned physicians, might many diseases be avoided—yet disease or senility or accident would inevitably prevail. . . "Why," he had often preached, "they are not at all inconsistent with holiness! We Christians expect them as trials of our faith!"

It was Marian who had planted the hardy seeds of doubt in his mind—Marian, who had flouted society because God came first; Marian, who had incurred a world's frown by forsaking popularity to acquire a demonstrable knowledge of Principle. It was she who had bidden him choose between Spirit and matter, for both he could *not* have and live. And it was because of her that he had plunged so desperately and deeply into the materialism which he had chosen to denominate "St. Jude's institutional activities".

It was because of Marian that, after her departure from Crestelridge, he had gone to his parishioners, seeking refutation from them of her harsh charges. "What does the word 'Chris-

tian' mean to you?" he had asked dozens. And they had answered variously—yet so as to leave him gaping. "Its meaning is . . . er . . . ethical," Henry Tellus had offered. "Applying it to acts, or to intentions, we would call that 'Christian' which is . . . er . . . well-meaning, or kindly intentioned, you know." As for a "Christian" man, some said he must be the opposite of an atheist—and stopped there. Others insisted that a "Christian" must be an adherent to some definite religious creed. To some, the word "Christian" implied tolerance; to others, its antithesis. "The Christian Church is founded upon Christ, you know," was frequently offered. But attempted adumbration of this always led to chaos. Mrs. Dodd declared that her big Collie was as good a Christian as herself, because of his affection for children. Some averred that without baptism nobody could be a Christian. One asserted that a Christian was one who had "got religion". "To be a consistent Christian," a young society woman put forth with significant emphasis, "you've got to give up everything pleasant, and think of nothing but sin and death and the blood of Jesus, and just sacrifice yourself to a long line of very uninteresting occupations." It reminded the rector of Ted Sayor's comment of long ago: "To those who really try to practice it, Christianity is a kill-joy, synonymous with dyspepsia and depression. But you Christians, you of St. Jude's, are the most hypocritical people on earth! You proscribe dancing and cards in Lent, but you don't abate your money-grabbing and Mammon-worship one jot! You stand up and sing: 'Oh, how I love Jesus', with your thought on raising the rent of your tenements, or boosting foodstuffs till your brothers starve!". . .

And there were some to whom the rector's question caused marked embarrassment. By these he was indubitably shown that Christianity was the property of the preachers—it was well for the layman to practice it in a quiet manner, provided he did not become obtrusive, fanatical, or permit it to color his conversation or becloud his common-sense. They felt weak and ashamed when obliged to refer to it publicly. Religion tended to render a virile man effeminate. . .

Some looked down their noses and felt ill at ease when the rector put his question. These would have swelled with importance and loudly boasted themselves Democrats or Republicans, but *Christians!* . . . they colored, fidgeted, side-stepped, or gave the rector offended stares.

Yet Marian, the rector knew, had been mastered by her religion. Whatever it was—and he regarded it as utterly unevangelical—it was the biggest thing in her life. And she had talked of God as if He lived next door! The strictly or-

thodox had regarded her as Satan's first lieutenant—with Satan embodied in the Galuth—yet nobody accused her of weakness, and few there were who considered her visionary, a crank, or a bore. By some, as by Ted Sayor, there had been a tacit admission that she possessed *something* that they did not—but its very mystery constituted its devilishness, for to the human mind the unknown is always peopled with imps.

In mitigation of the depression resultant from the divergent replies to his question, the rector had eagerly taken up the problem of church union, then rapidly coming to the fore among the aftermath of the war. A united Christianity—whatever the latter might mean—became his dream. The Roake plan had promised it, and with St. Jude's as head. But the promises were disappointingly slow of fulfillment . . . But to unite Christendom in "one flock under one Shepherd"! An ambitious financial "drive", and the "Interchurch World Movement" was assured!

It took weeks of his time, and exhausted his energy. Then upon his eager ears fell dissentient voices. *"Rome declines to consider any other plan except reunion under the Pope, for the Roman Catholic Church is the only true Church, and all others are schismatic and anathema."*

But he had expected that. It was really the Protestant churches upon which he had rested his faith. . .

Came then other dissentient voices: *"The Protestant Episcopal Church, having the Apostolic succession and Holy Orders, cannot play second fiddle to any mere sect."* And yet another: *"The Pedobaptists cannot agree to it, because they insist on infant baptism."* And: *"The Baptists cannot, because, holding a position with regard to the initiatory rite of the gospel, acknowledged by the scholarship of the world to be absolutely correct, they cannot compromise it."* And the innumerable Protestant divisions rattled forth the tenets of Luther, Calvin, Knox, and the host of religious reformers, and declared themselves unable to surrender a jot of their *"spiritual independence."*

The great "drive" failed, and the movement dashed to pieces on the rocks of human belief, leaving a staggering indebtedness upon the churches of six million dollars. Yet the significance of the failure lay not in the financial aspect, but rather in the demonstrated fact that the Christian Church had revealed itself not sufficiently Christian to demonstrate the Christ.

Forced back upon himself, the disillusioned rector had been brought again face to face with Marian's charges. Though he had not the understanding to see things as they really were, yet a conviction of the Church's desperate condition was deep-

ening hourly. The Church was in the last ditch, and upon it had descended the flood of human dilemma.

But—at least as regarded St. Jude's—he knew himself to be responsible. In its lurid advertising, its county-fair stunts, and its mountebank shows he had degraded its pulpit! As he watched, shame-smitten, his new assistant's vaudeville offerings in the name of the Gospel his soul burned under the question: "Who would even *guess* that these performances had anything to do with the Christ-message?" And once, in righteous anger, he had rushed to the bulletin board at the church entrance and ripped from it the offensive announcement: "*You'll all come to church some day—in a hearse. But why wait till you can't hear our vested choir?*" And then he had stood, shaking with fear. For it was Doctor Roake who had suggested these "stunts".

Looking back now, the harried rector believed he could date his suffering from Marian's return to Crestelridge, some six months prior to Alden's enforced enlistment. She had stirred him profoundly then, and ere his disturbed thought could settle he had become involved in circumstances that appeared now, in retrospect, to have been shaped at that same time and by influences opposing hers. The Roake plan had developed then —and thereupon had followed such a procession of evils as he had never thought to witness. These evils had culminated in Alden's condemnation. What further horrors were approaching, he dared not guess.

But he knew that he could not meet them, for his own powers of endurance were now exhausted. He had abandoned his plan to attend the Triennial General Convention of the Church when it fell, months since, for the reason that he feared to express his unsettled state of mind. He dared not face the Roake convention now, lest the anger of an outraged God strike him dead before the hungering people for his hypocrisy. He was an admitted moral coward—but he had long since gone mad with fear. Death, rampant and inexorable, possessed his soul as it possessed the world. "Ah, God," he moaned, "what a fruitless pilgrimage is life! A haphazard wandering through the mists of error, without purpose, without certainty, and at last without hope!"

He had intended, after Marian's departure, and with the promise of a brighter day to dawn upon the launching of the Roake plan, to investigate certain of her ideas as enunciated in her talks with him. Chief of these was that of the nature of matter. But he recalled how Ted Sayor's biting sallies had once driven him to investigate the Higher Criticism, so-called, and how his surreptitious readings had all but convinced him

that Jesus had not risen from the dead, and that the whole Christian system was but the development of a pious fraud. And so frightened had he become at the drift which his mind was taking that he had hurriedly burned the books and resolved never again to undertake a similar investigation.

But soon the very fact that he was dodging the issue apparently caused his obsession by it, and the nature of matter became to him a haunting specter. He bought text-books and treatises on the physical sciences; he frequented the libraries; he purchased a microscope, and searched and delved. He made frequent trips to New York City to consult with professors and men of learning. He spent days and nights under the obsession —and yet always so as to avoid arousing suspicion, always so as to prevent questioning by the argus-eyed Doctor Roake.

What, under different circumstances, might have proved a pleasant and profitable occupation, became to the rector an agonized search for the unattainable, amid surroundings of the greatest danger. And always his enslavement to Doctor Roake grew heavier; always the convention loomed larger and more terrifying; always the tragedy enacted in proud St. Jude's ate deeper and deeper into his soul; and steadily the awful day of Alden's execution drew nearer. Steadily too his own hope faded and his faith withered—and always his wife and Ethel became more estranged from him, always his isolation became more dreadfully pronounced. They were ashamed of him, these two! He knew it—had long known it. They would drive him from them, when Roake had finished with him, as they had driven Marian. . .

He had seen it coming. He knew that, with their errors —especially Ethel's dreadful sin—securely covered, their scant remnant of sympathy had been alienated from him. But his life of utter submission had left him without the moral strength to stand alone. But he could not flee—and he could not remain to witness evil's final triumph. If he refused to attend the Roake convention now, refused to enact his hypocritical rôle, it meant his destruction, loss of his church, his prestige, his very existence! . . .

Oh, he was mad! He knew he was mad! Knew he was a moral coward! . . . But he was not a physical one: he would go . . . he would escape the hideous convention . . . he would sever his mocking family ties . . . they wished it, he wished it. And he laughed. But St. Jude's should not be further disgraced by his going. And he laughed again, shrilly. Could St. Jude's, already befouled beyond retrieve, be further stained? Then, as the darkness gathered, he looked back over the course along which he had steered his church; he looked at the works

that his hand had wrought; he looked at the labor that he had labored—none so zealously!—to do; and in the agony of a passing soul he cried: "Vanity! vanity!" . . .

Night had fallen while he struggled, but he had not noticed it. Shrouded in spiritual darkness, he had not seen the day die. The ticking of the clock on his desk had attracted him. It had become diabolical. *"Ten days, ten days, ten days!"* it repeated over and over. Ten days ere the Roake convention should open! Ten days ere Alden Cragg should grapple with death! Ten days of distilled hell for him! . . .

He, face that convention? *He?* Face it as Roake's minion? Face it and stultify his soul? . . . He, live through the day when Alden Cragg would wrestle vainly with death? . . . that horrible combat to which he, with his master, Roake, had sent the lad? . . .

He rose and paced the floor. He thrust his thin hands through his hair and tore it madly. He sobbed aloud. He wailed in unfathomable agony. His crazed brain seemed to crack. He tottered back to his table and threw himself across it in black despair. . .

Through the distance came, faintly borne on the frozen air, the whistling of a locomotive. He heard it, and with a cry he sprang to his feet. Horror was upon him. His collar was torn open at the throat. His face was ashen. And clammy sweat stood out over his quivering frame. That whistle was death's summons! *That* was the way! The *only* way! And he rushed from the house and out into the night.

None marked him, for the night was dark and the snow fell thickly. The seven o'clock express from the city would be due. . . He would meet it, on the outskirts, beyond the hill where stood "Craggmont". . . He would meet it . . . for *that* was the way! . . .

It was midnight when he came to himself. And then, faint and chill, he realized that he was standing at the foot of a hill that he recognized. "It is finished," he murmured thickly. And he began the steep ascent.

Painfully, wearily, he toiled upward. Now he held to a friendly tree to rest; now he stood panting, yearning toward the summit of the road. "It is finished," he repeated. It was the Nazarene's cry of victory on the cross, which the mortal world has falsely interpreted as the wail of defeat. "It is finished—God's work is *done!*" The Master had triumphed at the very moment when mortals believed him overwhelmed.

The crest gained, the exhausted rector paused a moment at a gate; then he opened it and stumbled on, up the short walk to the door. "It is finished," he murmured again as he feebly knocked.

The door opened. Madam Galuth gave a startled little cry when she recognized the disheveled man. And she seized his arm and drew him in.

A form came flying toward him out of the darkness. *"Father!"*

The rector's head jerked upward. That voice!—it was from another world. His straining gaze fell upon Marian. He gasped, swayed, and fell in a pathetic heap at her feet.

CHAPTER 17

WHAT occurred that wintry night in the home of Madam Galuth remained forever dim in outline to the rector. Nor could he ever recall but the barest details of the tremendous struggle through which, as by a hand invisible, he had been led to Marian Whittier. He had recognized her ere the darkness closed over him. And, believing her dead, the thought had flashed upon him that he himself had passed through death unto life. And he wondered vaguely, even as he fell at her feet, that he had not felt the night express crash over him.

When the light again drove the clouds back from his racked mentality, he was lying upon a sofa in the Galuth's little parlor, and the girl sat at his side holding his hand. His first impression was of returning from death's open door. It was an impression that never afterward left him, but became inseparably associated with another equally strong, namely, that she had called him back.

For, as he came emerging through the shadows, he thought he heard the girl's voice, insistent, assertive; now he recalled her oft-repeated declaration: "God is your Life!" And a sweet, unfamiliar sense of peace stole over him, for he knew Marian ever spoke truth.

Then he sat up, at her bidding. And as he did so, he seemed to feel lighter, as if a great burden had fallen away. In pathetic eagerness he would have babbled a thousand questions, born of his mental tumult, his confusion, and the strange *dénouement* of his rending experience. But she checked them. In a few words she explained her presence there; explained the presence of Doctors Benson and Rowley, whose voices he heard from the adjacent room; and then impressed upon him that his own light had come, that the doors had closed behind him, and that he was now under the divine command which they were obeying, to come out and be separate. And then, for Alden's sake, for his own safety and that of the great work which she and these

faithful others were advancing, she urged upon him the necessity of returning at once to the rectory. He had the strength and the courage, she knew, to return, and to guard the secret of her presence in Crestelridge from those who would seize upon it to wreak the destruction of them all. He was instructed by her to go to the office of Doctor Rowley on the morrow. There it would be revealed to him what he should do.

What he should do! Her words stirred his soul's depths. "Marian," he cried in an agony of yearning, "in God's name tell me what I shall do to be saved!"

And the girl had answered that he must sell that he had and give to the poor—he must rid himself of his material concepts and give pure Christianity to a spiritually starving world—he must lay down his life, his human sense of soul in matter—he must lay down his orthodox sense of a material earth and a gold-paved, pearl-gated heaven of matter—he must abandon his deadly sense of value in possessions material, in caste, in place, and worldly power—he must turn from the "one lie" of mortal mind to his unknown God—and he must go forward, though the very gates of hell close behind him. . .

And while she spoke he sank upon his knees before her and vowed brokenly that from that hour he would seek only unto her God. He was blind, blind as Paul, upon whom the Light had burst. But she bade him know that his spiritual sight should be opened.

Then Doctor Rowley took his arm and led him gently through the snow, the cold, and the darkness of the early morning hour, back to the rectory.

Fortunately now, the growing estrangement between the rector and his wife rendered it unnecessary that he should explain to her his absence from the McBean dinner the preceding night, as well as his very late return home. Had she ventured an honest opinion, she would have said that he had spent the night at the bedside of a suffering parishioner, for the Spanish influenza, though abating, still prevailed. But she would not humiliate herself that morning by questioning him. She breakfasted in her boudoir and nursed her vengeance until, toward noon, she received a telephone call from Mrs. McBean. "The rector has just 'phoned me," the latter blithely announced, "that circumstances which he seemed unable to control prevented his taking dinner with us last evening. He was *so* sweet! I think, Mrs. Whittier, that our dear rector is overworked, don't you? His voice shook so when he talked with me. . ."

Whereupon Mrs. Whittier drew a deep sigh. *That* episode had been taken care of! She would keep a more vigilant eye

upon her spouse in future and relieve a none too certain Providence.

The rector's presence as usual in his customary place in the Roake offices the following morning prevented suspicion from that quarter. And Doctor Roake was too occupied to note any change in the rector's demeanor. In the course of the morning Doctor Rowley called, as was his wont. And had Doctor Roake not been so very busy he would have invited Rowley to lunch with him. As it was, he turned him over to the rector.

But there was no lunch that day for these two. Instead, they covertly made their way to Doctor Rowley's office, where, shortly, Doctor Benson joined them.

And then it was revealed to the rector by Doctor Rowley that Marian designed to send him into the Roake convention, among the theologians, the churchmen, the doctors assembled there in the majesty of learning and authority, to bid them know God.

The rector paled as he listened. Surely he had not the strength for such a mission! But the girl had sent word that it would be told him what he should say. And in preparation for the great task he was to come to Doctor Rowley's office each night thereafter, where would be transmitted to him the teaching which every day Marian would prepare for him. Doctor Rowley would impart this, having first received it from her. "And I have come a long way," the doctor said; "though it was Alden Cragg himself who laid the foundation for me in Florida."

The rector gasped as he listened to the revelation, and his head hung in deep abasement. "Surely the Lord was in this place, and I knew it not!" he groaned. "The infinite Good does indeed encompass mankind, but we blinded mortals see naught but evil!" At length he bade Doctor Rowley let him go—he could hear no more. "Oh, my God!" he cried, while hot tears of sorrow burned their way down his cheeks, "I see it now! What I have missed—what I have thrown away! I see what mesmerism did to me and through me as a channel! But vengeance is mine, saith the Lord, *I* will repay! And He has repaid to the last farthing! . . ."

Doctor Rowley turned to Benson after the shaken rector had gone. "Well," he said, "what do you think now?"

"Think!" cried Benson. "I guess I don't think! My thinking is done for me by that girl!"

"Will Alden Cragg go to the chair?"

"Yes; and he'll die there, too!"

"Then your thinking is *not* done for you by that girl."

"But what in heaven's name has all this got to do with Cragg?" Benson demanded. "The rector can't save him! And

we haven't found Fay Meuse! And we're not certain that she shot Harris anyway!"

"But, on the theory that a murderer frequently returns to the scene of the crime, her return to Crestelridge would strengthen the probability. . ."

"What then? Have we any case?"

"I can't say that we have. But Marian seems to have a plan."

Doctor Benson shook his head. "There are nine days left before Cragg goes to the chair. What can she do in that time?"

"I cannot say. But what has she done so far, and in less time? A great deal, you must admit."

"Why, a lot has happened. . ."

"Happened? My friend, *nothing ever happens!* Why did the rector, supposedly Roake's chief of staff, come to Madam Galuth's last night? What changed him so completely? I am overwhelmed when I think of it, for on any human theory it is utterly unaccountable. Why is it that Marian can look out upon the deplorable condition of the world to-day and declare that it is a condition for rejoicing? It is because she *knows* that God is infinite Good, and that therefore the seeming evil condition of the world is but an utterly false concept. She *knows* that Principle governs in the world's affairs, even where all hell appears to mortal sight to be let loose. And upon that knowledge she correctly estimates the forces of evil at zero, with the victory for the right inevitable. Evil, to her, is an essentially conquerable thing, because she knows it to be but a mental negation of infinite Good. You think her mad to declare in the face of a world in ruins that all is well; but I say to you that in so doing she is expressing her infinite good sense—which is her sense of infinite goodness."

"Humph! We shall see."

"We *shall* see—those of us who have eyes. And now I must give you a message from her that I had almost omitted. You are to enlist the coöperation of Doctors Lann and Sale at once. She has evidently been working on what she has heard you say about them."

"Enlist . . . Lann and Sale! Why, they're members of Roake's organization! Impossible!"

"Well, I am but repeating her instructions. And, if I were you, I would obey her."

And Doctor Benson, strenuously working against himself by the insistent declaration that the thing was impossible, went that afternoon to interview Doctors Lann and Sale.

And that same afternoon, following further instructions, he and Doctor Rowley began a systematic search of morgue records, in their endeavor to learn Ted Sayor's fate.

And, finally, that evening the rector worked late in the Roake offices, worked feverishly, with eyes aglow, then telephoned the advice to the rectory that he would be in consultation with Doctor Rowley before returning home. Some hours later, together with Rowley, he encircled brilliantly lighted "Craggmont" and entered the Galuth home unseen. Before the fireplace they found Marian, talking earnestly to Madam Galuth, Doctor Benson, Boots, and—the rector halted with an exclamation on his lips—Fay Meuse!

CHAPTER 18

MIRACLES, in the popular sense of an abrogation of natural law, do not occur. A law that can be broken was never law. And natural law has been repeatedly demonstrated to be only "an average of chances".

It was but logical for Marian to conclude, from Doctor Benson's recital of his experience with the woman, from the testimony given at Alden's trial by her friends, and from the reports of Boots, whom the girl had instructed to "shadow" the Dodd apartment building, that Fay Meuse would return to Crestelridge. The woman and her friends had been associated with motion pictures, Marian learned, and she forthwith sent Boots to scrape acquaintance with these friends, if possible. This the fellow did, most cleverly, by securing employment in the studio to which he watched them drive. The world would say here that chance favored him. Be that as it may, he offered himself at a moment when an elaborate scene of English life was about to be depicted and a real English lackey was in demand to replace the very incompetent American who had bungled the part. Boots lacked even a trace of histrionic art. But he could be natural under all circumstances, and this he demonstrated to the satisfaction of the exacting director.

With such an introduction, it was simplicity itself for the droll fellow, recently returned from vivid experiences in France, to ingratiate himself with the actress friends of Fay Meuse, and adroitly learn that she was again in the city, although no longer "doing pictures". To report her to the Health Executive—Doctor Benson securing the assistance of Doctor Lann in this—was the next step, accompanying the report with a reminder of her illegal avoidance of medical inspection under the Wess law during unfortunate Harris Chaddock's administration. Then, when Doctor Lann advised Benson that another raid was about to be made on Fay Meuse's apartment, it was Boots who,

in the rôle of a real hero, flew to her friends and, with their aid, rescued the endangered woman.

Again it was Boots who solved the question of asylum for the persecuted creature by suggesting Doctor Benson, who had warned him of the proposed raid. And she seized the suggestion avidly, for the good doctor had befriended her before—had perhaps saved her life—and she knew him to be unalterably opposed to medical tyranny of the Roake sort. . .

Doctor Benson received her with paternal kindness and at once offered her refuge in the only place where he was certain she would remain unmolested, the home of the shunned and despised Galuth.

She started and half rose from her chair at the unanticipated suggestion. He appeared not to notice her conduct, but proceeded to explain that she could be of real service—and with adequate pay—to him and others in the great work of opposing this very medical aggression under which she had so suffered. He knew, did the wise old doctor—though he closely concealed the knowledge—that she could not safely refuse his offer. And as he sat awaiting her decision, he knew that she knew it too.

She entered the Galuth home that day nerve-wracked and trembling, blenching at every sound. She had lost weight, the doctor observed; she had aged, and there was a hunted look in her face. But as she stood in the hallway, gasping at first, then boldly defiant, Madam Galuth came to her and took her at once to her bosom. "We need you, dear," the motherly, white-haired woman said. "And you are seeking shelter from the storm. Let this house be your home."

Fay Meuse burst into tears and dropped upon the sofa. As she did so, Marian came to her and took the sobbing creature in her arms.

Then, as she grew calm, under the girl's comforting words, Marian briefly outlined to her the work that she could do. The woman became interested, even eager. She concurred in the requirements. She accepted the terms. And she offered suggestions on her part: she would assist with the housework. She could operate the typewriter, not expertly, but passably well. Marian seized upon the idea. Together they would, first, transcribe her notes on Anglo-Israel—"It will give us practice," she said—and then would follow the real work.

The deep secrecy surrounding the activity in the Galuth home appeared to appeal strongly to the woman. Gradually she yielded her confidence to Marian. And when the latter at length said: "This is such a little house. I want you to room with me," the woman shed tears of gratitude as she eagerly acquiesced.

To Doctor Benson, the conduct of Fay Meuse became now an absorbing study of a human soul on trial. "If she endures," he declared to Doctor Rowley, "she is innocent. But Alden's execution is only a week off. Time is the vital factor now."

"But what has she to endure," Rowley asked, "but the deepest, most wonderful love that ever surrounded a fallen mortal?"

"That's just it!" exclaimed Benson. "Can she stand it? By heaven! if Marian loved me that way I . . . I . . . I'd . . ."

"But so she loves Alden Cragg. So, I believe, she loves us. But, Benson, it is a *new* sort of love, a kind that the world does not know. And, if I am not mistaken, *it is the most powerful thing in the universe!*"

"But she's losing time, Rowley, she's losing time!" cried Benson, falling back upon his ever-present doubts. "Why, she hasn't done a thing about Roake's convention as yet! And she refuses to let us do the *one* thing that might free Cragg, and that is to confront Fay Meuse with the pistol that killed Harris Chaddock!"

Doctor Rowley smiled tolerantly. "You are very like certain of my patients," he said, "who believe that unless the doctor is pouring something down their throats he is not doing anything for them. Why, Benson, it is the very *simplicity* of her work that confuses you. And that, like the simplicity of her character, comes from her profound thought. She came here without visible weapons of any sort to confront circumstances that no other human being would dare meet. Do you think it is easy for her to keep away from Alden Cragg? Then you are less wise than I thought you. Don't you think that, humanly, she longs to give him the comfort that a knowledge of her presence here and her work for him would give? Remember, she is still human—or she would not be visible to our materialistic vision. And, believe me, she has an incessant struggle to meet the suggestions of human belief! Do you think you and I are fighting? God above! that girl's hourly battle puts our puny efforts to everlasting shame!"

"Go on!" cried Benson. "Go on! I want you to talk that way to me! Call me a blithering fool, a blundering blockhead! I'll work better for it! I've done nothing but get in her way! I'm in her way now! But, by heaven! . . ."

"You don't understand her, because her work is impersonal; you don't feel that you are accomplishing anything unless you are handling persons. Can't you see that she is *not* fighting Roake? She is meeting, not human personalities, but conditions of thought. She is reversing, reversing, constantly reversing the false claims of mortal mind. The rector comes to her praying for death. She shows him that he is not tired of life,

but of his false consciousness that he has so mistakenly called life. And then she shows him how to get rid of that unsatisfying consciousness and acquire a better one. He thought he could get rid of it by suicide. He knows better now. We go to her with our laments regarding the present discordant, inharmonious state of society, and she shows us that it is not society that needs renovating, but our own concepts. We see our *thoughts,* Benson. Stick to that! Then change your thinking, and society and the world will change to correspond. The world thought war until it nearly killed itself; the world-consciousness became one of chaos, revealing with mathematical precision just what the world had been thinking about. Can't you see it? And then can't you glimpse what she means by insisting that the bedraggled, bruised old world is now facing a most glorious opportunity? I can't tell you just how the rector was brought to her. I don't know just how Boots was led to us, nor why Fay Meuse is with the girl now. But this I *do* know: it is God's way. And His ways are deep, mysterious, but perfect."

"But Roake will strike. . ."

"Evil will strike through Roake. . . Not knowing that Marian is here, he will probably strike at Madam Galuth. I presume she will be imprisoned again. But she has wisely provided for that by installing Marian as leader in this work."

"Then Roake will strike at her!"

"Oh, doubtless. And if I would permit myself to become apprehensive it would be for that reason. But, Benson, I am learning that Principle governs. And I am trusting to that government."

The days went swiftly by, and Doctor Benson strove heroically to hold himself. "Six days to Cragg's execution!" he counted grimly. Then he checked himself and tried to divert his thought.

The results of his preliminary talks with Doctors Lann and Sale had been doubtful, except that Doctor Lann had, for old friendship's sake, and to lend his aid toward clearing Alden, joined in the conspiracy to bring Fay Meuse under the influence of Marian Whittier. "I'll do all I can, Benson," he had said. "And I will guard your secret. But when you ask me to join you in openly opposing Doctor Roake you are asking the impossible. Of course, if you can bring me proofs of your charges against him . . . But as it is, Benson, I'd only be committing suicide."

Proofs! The witnesses were indeed a cloud! . . . But, alas! they were mute.

"Five days!" Benson set his teeth as he went about his

work. He knew that Rowley was having a mightier struggle than his words or conduct would indicate. He knew that the rector was literally kept alive by Marian. And Marian . . . "How in God's name can she stand it?" was his constant query.

Nightly the rector stole to the office of Doctor Rowley—and often from there to Madam Galuth's. He appeared to live now in a mental daze. The hours when he was away from Marian seemed interminable and void.

And always there hung over him, and over them all, the fearful menace of discovery. Mrs. Whittier had increased her vigilance; but the rector, to inhibit suspicion, sought now occasion to attend social functions with her. He forced himself to spend more time at "Craggmont"—though the hours there were exquisite torture. He tried to show himself more sedulous in his work in the Roake offices. It was deception, he knew. But it was the lesser of two evils. He was as yet unprepared to take the stand that he knew he must take all too soon. And even if he were ready, the hour was not yet come.

His interest in Fay Meuse was almost morbid. The love that Marian showered upon her was to him a marvel. Doctor Benson had declared to him that he believed the woman to be a traitoress, that she would eventually expose them all to Doctor Roake. And as the rector studied her he was inclined to the same belief. She had at first manifested a variety of emotions, at times almost hysterical, again ominously calm. Of late she had become quiet, meditative. And the coarseness which she had at first manifested at frequent intervals had now disappeared quite. Marian had apparently given the woman her complete confidence; had insisted on her presence at their discussions of methods of opposition to the Roake convention; and had made her talks on matters religious to Doctor Rowley and the rector with Fay Meuse always at hand—ostensibly to take notes to be subsequently transcribed on the typewriter, but really, the rector knew, for a far different end.

"Four days more!" counted Doctor Benson. And he closed and locked his office door that he might storm unmolested and unheard.

Delegates to the convention were now arriving. The newspapers were devoting increasingly more space to every detail of the interesting and important event. The rector scarce closed his eyes at night. He had not visited Alden again: Marian could not trust him now to do so. But she had sent Madam Galuth to the jail often. And Madam Galuth reported that Doctor Roake had not ceased his visits to Alden, nor his importunities to the end of causing the youth to reveal his vital experience in Palestine which, the doctor knew, in some manner involved

Marian and might lead to a revelation of her present whereabouts. To the last, the doctor held out the certainty of freedom if Alden would but accept his counsel; to the last Alden returned him an uncompromising negative.

And the baleful rumor of Alden's readiness to meet death as a test of his religious convictions now overshadowed all else. Members of the Roake organization came to attend the convention with that on their lips. The clamor for tickets of admission to the execution was portentous in its grewsome significance. Doctor Roake made the announcement that he would himself attend the execution and lecture on the scientific aspects of the case to the assembled convention. Thereupon the press overflowed with sensational speculations. Gamblers seized the occasion to place bets on the outcome. Society gasped in mingled horror and morbid anticipation. . .

Doctor Rowley carefully watched the effect of all this upon Fay Meuse. But, beyond the fact that she appeared to have yielded herself to Marian's great love, he saw nothing to indicate her complicity in the assassination of Harris Chaddock. "But she is tremendously interested in what Marian says," he voiced to Doctor Benson. "She hangs on the girl's every word. She appears to have found something that she has been searching for all her life: a satisfying religious conviction. Perhaps it will end there. If so, Marian will have at least done a good work."

"It *will* end there," Benson gloomily replied. "And what has been done toward meeting Roake's convention?" He sprang up and began to pace the floor. "It's a one-man affair, this damnable convention! That man is Roake! If we could get him out of the way the convention would collapse! Rowley, I'll *kill* him! I'll sacrifice myself and go to the electric chair; I'll ruin this convention by shooting him!"

"And thereby render him a martyr-hero?" said Rowley. "Get hold of yourself, Benson! It's up to us to play the man! Think of that girl!"

The day closed amid the seething ebullition of mortal mind. Doctor Benson returned to his office from Madam Galuth's at three in the morning and sat in his chair until dawn. At eight Doctor Rowley entered. Benson met him with a feral snarl. "Any developments?"

"No."

Benson's voice rose shrilly. *"Three days more!* And then, between sunrise and the hour . . ."

"Benson!"

"Rowley, if God lets Alden Cragg go to his death I'll tramp this earth preaching against Him, by heaven, I will!"

"Benson! Hold yourself!"

That night, after a harrying day, they crept again to Madam Galuth's. The rector admitted them. And consternation—nay, despair—was stamped on his features. "Madam Galuth and Marian are upstairs," he said haltingly. "Before they come down we have a . . . a very important matter . . . to discuss. That woman . . . Fay Meuse . . . has *gone!*"

CHAPTER 19

DOCTOR BENSON was the first to recover speech. "She has gone to Roake!" he gasped. "It's all over now!"

"But she would fall into the clutches of the Health Executive!" the rector cried, grasping at the faint ray of hope.

"Bah!" Benson combated. "For what she can now give Roake he will absolve her and make her rich! She's fixed . . . and so are we!"

"I fear you are right," admitted the rector in a fallen voice. "It is apparent that she was in Doctor Roake's employ all the time. We have stumbled into our own trap. Madam Galuth tells me that Doctor Roake has proposed a plan to Alden whereby he may escape death. . ."

"Would to heaven he had accepted it!" groaned Benson. "Now it's too late!"

"Perhaps not! Perhaps not! Let us go to him at once!"

But Doctor Rowley raised a detaining hand. "I think you are mistaken," he said slowly. "To me, the woman's flight is an admission of her guilt. I believe she was glad at first of the refuge here. But the truth which she constantly heard in Marian's talks to us stirred her to her soul's depths. The atmosphere of love that surrounds this place was stifling the error that has been her dæmon. It rose in fury and drove her forth, for she was not able to resist it."

"A pretty theory. . . God grant that it may be more!" said Benson ruefully. "But it leaves Cragg doomed!"

"Let us go at once to the governor!" urged the rector. "If we lay all the facts before him . . ."

"Such facts as we could place before him would appear to him ridiculous!" Benson objected. "No, it is better to admit our defeat and take our medicine. Roake has us foul! To fight him now . . ."

Marian came into the room while the doctor was speaking. He turned upon her, stared at her expectantly for a moment, then blurted: "Well, what are we going to do *now?*"

"We are going to work," she quietly returned.

"But Roake . . ."

" 'We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places'," she answered him.

It was while Marian had been talking to the rector that night, armoring him for the lists, that Fay Meuse had abruptly risen and gone upstairs to the room which she and Marian occupied. A few minutes later they heard her descend. Then the rear door opened and closed sharply. Marian sprang up and hurried to the door. But the woman had been swallowed by the night.

Against the counsel of despair urged by Doctor Benson, and against the fear-born, paralyzing suggestions of the rector, Marian now stood firm. The false god of reaction, of relapse, had mesmerized these with the human law of the "pendulum swing". Yet it was because they held so firmly to the mortal belief that there is evil to slip back into—a belief which must prevail where there has been a presupposition of reality in evil conditions. But a mirage is no more real when viewed mentally than physically, though few there be who know it. And, like the desert guide, it was Marian's task to see through the mirage of evil.

"Only *three* days more!" muttered Doctor Benson, as he groped his way through the black night toward his office.

And with the dawn he sprang from his chair crying: "Two! *Two!*"

Well for Alden, perhaps, that of the battle being waged by Marian he knew nothing. Of her presence there, of Fay Meuse's return to Crestelridge, of all that had occurred to the rector, and of events in the home of Madam Galuth he was in complete ignorance. His thought had been left undisturbed by these. And as the hour crept stealthily nearer when he must meet, not his God, as the judge who sentenced him had said, but the false god of this world, he felt himself more and ever more completely armored. He had entertained no thought of meeting death as a reality and spectacularly wrestling with it to draw its fangs. That figment, he knew, was newspaper sensationalism, provoked by the rumor which he could trace directly to Doctor Roake. He would meet the world's tenacious belief in the reality and terrors of death with the spiritual preparation vouchsafed him. But the issue lay with his God.

And it had been a long preparation, and a thorough one, that these months of confinement had afforded him: in them he had worked out much. On the basis of his transmuting experience in Antonia's Tower, supplemented by Marian's teaching, and bulwarked by his further demonstrations under Madam Galuth's

wise guidance since his return to Crestelridge, he had become still further transformed until he knew that not only had he regained the deep spirituality with which he had emerged from the vestibule of death in Palestine, but had acquired yet more. Vain now was the taunt of error: "Where is thy God?" And to the demand: "Adam, where art thou?" he had the spiritual answer: "He is not."

In those long, quiet hours his thought turned often to Marian, and often human speculations in regard to her would clamor for entertainment. But Madam Galuth, though frequently referring to some utterance which the girl had voiced, some demonstration over error made, gave no hint of her whereabouts; and Alden held to his belief that she must still be uncovering the footsteps of literal Israel, even as he was tracing spiritual Israel's journey from sense to soul. And he crushed back the human emotions that surged up against him and faced steadily the light. . .

And he was glad. For Doctor Roake had come again to him with the serpent's suggestion. And now the mask was dropped. "It amounts to this," the doctor had said: "it is vital that I should learn where Marian Whittier is. Indeed, it is vital to us both. If you will give me that information, or procure it for me, I can save you from the chair in the manner already outlined. And I will go further, and secure your release from the asylum within a reasonable time. I will also restore 'Craggmont' to you, and will help you to recover your lost wealth."

Alden lifted his head above the lethal gas. "I can do nothing for you," he said.

"But, Alden, why do you deliberately choose death? For, whatever your theories regarding death may be, I know that day after to-morrow you will die! Is it that you really did kill Harris, and now accept this punishment in atonement? Tell me."

"I am not responsible for Harris Chaddock's death," Alden replied.

"Then who is?"

Alden looked the man steadily in the eyes as he answered: "You."

* * * * * * * *

"One!" Doctor Benson shot the word savagely at Doctor Rowley, as they sat in the latter's office. "This is Alden Cragg's last day on earth! To-morrow, at sunrise . . ."

The rector entered. His face was haggard, and his limbs shook. "I am on my way to Doctor Roake's offices," he said brokenly. "I am too ill to work . . . but Marian insists that I go as usual to . . . my desk. I stopped in to learn if . . . if . . ."

"We have heard nothing," said Doctor Rowley. "Boots is scouring the city again. He will report to-night, at latest."

"I . . . you . . . we will go to Madam Galuth's to-night . . . as usual?"

"Marian has not advised us to the contrary, has she?"

"N-no. But I do not know that I can . . . can endure . . ."

"Marian will stand. And she expects the same of us."

It was the longest day of the year—and it was the shortest. Time's measure was eternity—and it was zero. Doctor Rowley found his employment in watching closely Doctor Benson, lest the latter precipitate the doom that hung over them all. "We gave our word to Marian," he grimly reminded Benson over and over throughout the day. "We promised that we would follow her and obey."

"I'm going to Roake! I'm . . ."

"You are not!"

"I'm going to the governor!"

"Not without her permission!"

"But—my God! we've abandoned Cragg! What's the girl thinking of?"

"Of her God!"

Throughout the day the girl and the white-haired woman stood facing the Red Sea. And the black waves hissed angrily at them, nor parted. "Do you wish to go to him, dearie?" the woman asked. And Marian answered: "I *am* with him; I have never left his side."

But she sent Madam Galuth again to his cell. And when the woman returned she asked: "Is he standing?" And when the answer was given: "He stands," the girl cried aloud: "Thank God! Thank God!"

It was the fullness of gratitude. And gratitude is the measure of one's consciousness of God. It was not gratitude for sense-impressions, themselves false indicators of a false good, but rather an expression of understanding that in the real realm of Mind all is well. It was the acknowledgment that her name and Alden's were "written in heaven".

In the afternoon Marian brought her Bible to Madam Galuth and read aloud the story of the stilling of the storm. "We are glad that we have faith, are we not?" she said. "Glad that we can say: 'Peace, be still'. And, oh, so glad that we know that the Master did not still the storm. For he knew that *there was no storm.* . ."

The evening shadows began to gather. Marian went to her room to be alone with her God. The same arms upon which she rested she knew were beneath Alden. To the world, they were both driven into the wilderness of Judah. Yet was it good for

them to be there; for the wilderness, though the symbol of darkness and desolation, yet is the indispensable "vestibule" wherein material sense fades, and the sense spiritual discerns the things of God.

She was glad that she had stood, that she was still standing; glad that she had not again tried to snatch Alden's problem away from God, but had stood aside, watching with Him, waiting with Him, knowing with Him. Thus, in larger measure, had the Master done, who had taken his stand for Principle, and who knew that all that could even seem to try to reverse the supremacy of God was the false claim of the communal mortal mind calling itself evil. And this was but mesmeric suggestion, coming as thought, and claiming a power omnipotent. The Master met it boldly, denied its blatant claims, and destroyed it with the two-edged assertions of Truth. Like him, Marian and Alden had in this crisis rendered their service to God alone.

Night fell. Crestelridge gleamed with light and buzzed with its human activities. "Craggmont" was ablaze. Doctor Roake was receiving the delegates to the health convention. In a luxuriously tapestried easy chair reclined Ethel, his invalided wife, wan, nervous, yet exquisitely gowned in the costliest of fabrics and agleam with jewels. Mrs. Whittier, her nerves taut to the breaking point, was assisting. The rector was expected soon—he had given his wife his word that he would come, though she might not know what it cost him.

The long rows of mansions of the Crestelridge rich were likewise brilliantly illuminated, for all held guests of the great convention. And everywhere might be heard the hushed discussion of the awful event set for the morrow. It had been decided that Alden should be removed to the state prison for the execution of his sentence, yet through some delay he was not to be taken away until midnight.

Darkness lay upon the little house of the Galuth opposite gleaming "Craggmont". Doctor Roake had glanced out in that direction once or twice during the evening, wonderingly. He could not have said why he had done so. Yet he was uneasy, abstracted, and increasingly nervous. He wished the morrow were over. He wished it were not necessary to discuss the thing with these people. And when Mrs. McBean came gushing to him with a noisy description of the huge orchid bouquet which she had sent that day to Alden's cell—for all the society women were doing it, and therefore it was *au fait*—he could have struck her.

On his way to "Craggmont" the rector skirted the hill and crept into the Galuth house. He found Rowley and Benson

there. Madam Galuth was with them, but Marian was in her room above.

"Boots has just been here," Doctor Rowley informed the rector in a low tone. "He has not found her. Nor do her friends seem to know where she is. But Boots will continue to search till the last moment. I have sent him to my office for a while to receive any telephone calls. I dare not trust my girl. Roake might call me, you know."

"But are you not expected at 'Craggmont'?"

"Yes. But I am delaying going as long as possible."

"But . . . Marian?"

"Hush!" It was Doctor Benson who spoke. "She is coming."

Marian's step was heard on the stairs. She came through the darkness and sat down in their midst. No one spoke, and the silence lay heavy upon them until the girl herself at last broke it.

"I want you to know," she said gently, and in a voice that seemed no longer human, "what it means to follow the Master's command: 'Abide in me'. For it is not a command; it is a divine privilege.

"It is to reach through the darkness of human belief and grasp Him who is closer to us than breathing, nearer than hand and foot. It is to know that the experiences before which men cower and fear are but occasions for deepest rejoicing and greater love. It is to stand, unwavering, undoubting, knowing ourselves as our great Father-Mother knows us in his consciousness of infinite good. It is to know that we are Love's children, encompassed in His ever-presence 'as the mountains are round about Jerusalem'.

"It is to know that human circumstances are unreal mental situations in a false consciousness—that they have no power to harm—that they can be changed by acquiring 'that Mind' through right thinking, as the Master taught and proved by his deeds. It is to hold no anxious thought for the morrow. . ."

A sob broke from the rector. He stifled it. The girl paused, but again went on.

"It is to have no dark foreboding as to our loved ones; it is to fear no danger for them; it is to cast out from our thought the aggressive suggestions of fear by reflection of the infinite Love that 'giveth us the oil of joy for mourning; the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness'. It is to know that in the realm of Love wherein we forever dwell there is no loss, no separation, no loneliness. It is to know that in the fullness of Life there is no death.

"The arrow that flieth by day has been loosed; the terror

by night has stalked through the land of mortal mind; the grave has yawned beneath our feet. Yet to abide in Him is to know that these things are but shadow-shapes of mortal thought. To abide in Him is to see them fade from sight.

"It is His pleasure to give us the Kingdom. But His work is done. Then the Kingdom has long since been ours. We possess it consciously when we abide in Him. On his cross the Master cried: 'It is finished.' The carnal world heard not in that great cry the glorious tidings that Man was immortal and death destroyed. For the carnal world sees and hears but the reverse of Truth. But we know, for we abide in Him. And now, on our cross, with the vials of human wrath poured out upon us, with the shadows closing in, here in the gloom of mortal suggestions of failure and defeat we can say in triumph to every aggressive and malicious claim of evil: 'It is finished.' God's work is done. And in the doing, evil was not included.

"Oh, death, where is thy sting? It was sin brought death. And sin is erroneous belief, not based on Principle. Yet we hold not these false beliefs. And death flees us. Death is the final deduction from the premise of life in matter. And matter is but mortality expressed.

"To abide in Him is to work—not to rest in mesmeric sloth in the fatal ease in matter, not to wait for Him to work for us. God's work is done. We, as His true reflection, must reflect His work in the constant activity of good. That activity is mental. It is of the thought.

"To abide in Him is to stand, facing evil's shafts with the shield of Truth. It is to know that these shafts are things of thought. And of thought that is but shadow and without substance. It is to stand with the courage of Daniel. The courage of the lions was animal fear: his was the true courage of the Lion of the tribe of Judah. He had no battle with the lions. He had conquered them even before he faced them. His battle had been with himself. The false sense of self conquered, no beast could do him harm.

"To abide in Him is self-conquest. To the human self Alden awaits death. Yet I know that, like Daniel, he met death ere the prison closed upon him. When to human sense he enters the death-chamber to-morrow he can say in the Master's confidence: 'It is finished.' And we must echo his cry of victory.

"Oh, thank God we have won! For the victory is always His. Thank God for the arms of Love that encircle us! For the divine consideration that broods over us and over Alden this night! Thank God that before the tomb of Lazarus we know that Man is deathless! Thank God that it is still light, though error has emptied its last vial of night! Thank God that 'it is finished', and that to error's end we abide in Him!"

The sobs of the rector echoed through the little dwelling as he sat in the shadows with his head buried in his hands and his body shaking. Doctor Benson had risen and gone to the window, where he stood staring out across the swale at glittering "Craggmont", with the tears dropping freely from his cheeks. Doctor Rowley remained motionless and with bowed head. Madam Galuth rose and went to Marian and threw an arm about her. The girl turned and moved through the darkness to the stairs. Then the rector's sobs died away, and silence again fell like a heavy pall. . .

Of a sudden the clatter of the telephone bell shattered the dreadful stillness, as it were the shivering of a window pane. Doctor Rowley gave a cry and sprang to the instrument. Benson wheeled and grasped a chair. The rector rose unsteadily. And the two women stood, as if rooted to the stairs.

"Madam Galuth's. Yes. Oh, Boots! Doctor Benson? Yes . . . yes! The woman! . . . Fay Meuse! . . . calling for Doctor Benson? . . ."

Doctor Benson was at Rowley's side in a leap and had torn the receiver from the other's hand. "Boots! . . . In God's name, what is it? . . . You said you would send me? God bless you, lad! I'm coming! I'm coming! . . ."

He dropped the receiver and sprang for his wraps. "Come, Rowley!" he called, as he started for the door.

"But . . . what is it?" cried the bewildered rector, swaying through the darkness with outstretched arms.

"I don't know! I don't know!" Benson almost shouted, as he rushed from the house. "Come, Rowley! *Run!*"

The weight of seventy years lay upon the bent shoulders of Doctor Benson, but they fell from him fast as he tore down the hill, followed by the younger and more athletic Doctor Rowley. A block away they caught a street car. Ten minutes later they were in a cab and speeding to the address which Boots had given them. . .

It was an apartment building, on the outskirts of Greater New York. They were admitted by a tear-stained woman who led them at once to the little chamber where Fay Meuse, stricken by the Spanish influenza, lay dying.

She smiled up at them and tried to extend a hand, but found the slight exertion too great. The doctors bent low to catch her words.

"It isn't . . . too late . . . is it?" she whispered. "I was sick . . . when I ran . . . away. . . But I was afraid she . . . Marian . . . would cure me . . . and I didn't want to . . . live."

She fell back, exhausted by the effort. Doctor Benson drew

Rowley aside and hurriedly whispered instructions to notify the police, for the woman, he knew, was going to make a confession, and they must have witnesses. Rowley went to the 'phone, and Benson administered stimulants to the woman and bade her rest for a while.

A few minutes afterward, with the sheriff and the police chief at her bedside, and with the doctors sustaining her through the fearful effort, Fay Meuse confessed to the premeditated murder of Harris Chaddock and completely exonerated Alden Cragg.

Then, as she lay back, a smile illumined her thin face and her eyes glowed. "I didn't know . . . what love was . . . until I went to . . . her. I would have let Cragg . . . die. But now . . . I am glad . . . to die . . . for him. . ."

And the dark veil fell.

CHAPTER 20

THE newspapers boomed it forth in shrieking midnight "extras". The telegraph, the cable, the radio flashed it across the world. For the world had been stirred to eager expectancy, and now it must be informed that Alden Cragg *had* met death and overcome it, but in a manner disappointing to the morbid. Yet not Alden Cragg, but Love, had conquered. But the world had still to learn that omnipotent God is Love. . .

The news, trembling from the lips of Doctor Rowley, was received over the throbbing wire by Madam Galuth. And she turned and threw her arms about the waiting girl at her side and burst into tears.

A dozen telephone messages conveyed the news to "Craggmont". Doctor Roake paled under it and stood as if stunned. Mrs. Whittier went into hysterics. And Ethel's face clouded and her lips curled. Then Doctor Roake, recovering himself, gave orders for congratulatory messages to be telephoned to the jail to Alden, and himself prepared to visit the youth and personally voice his joy in the outcome.

From the death-bed of Fay Meuse Rowley and Benson rushed to the jail. In their wake came scurrying reporters, midnight revelers, and curious society folk from Crestelridge's mansions. In a trice the fickle mob had reversed itself, and from preparations to gather at Alden's death-struggles like loathsome vultures, now had come to laud him as a hero.

They found him calm, scarce moved by the glad tidings that had been broken to him. They found him standing, erect,

his hands clasped behind his back. And to Benson and Rowley, with the girl's words impressed upon their thought, he appeared like a Daniel, unmindful of the lions that snarled about him. . . . And when he had received them all and thanked them, he requested of the sheriff that only Rowley and Benson be permitted to remain. He knew that he must pass the remainder of the night in jail, for there were legal processes to be observed ere he could be formally released. . .

Then, when the tardy winter sun looked out sleepily over the counterpane of snow, he left his narrow cell, stepped free of the limitations which carnal thought had thrown about him, and, with Rowley and Benson, was driven swiftly to the home of Madam Galuth. He had not been told that Marian was there.

There were no curious loiterers about the gate when he arrived. None knew, not even Doctor Roake, at what hour he would be released, nor whither he would go. Madam Galuth stood on the little porch with arms outstretched to him. . .

In the vocabulary of the author of the marvelous Fourth Gospel were two Greek words that have been mistakenly rendered by the English "love". One, as a distinguished critic has pointed out, has a "religious-ethical" significance; the other expresses love in the more human sense. Thus the great Gospel of John strives to give to the world the true understanding of Love.

How truly Marian Whittier and Alden Cragg understood this distinction must be gathered from their deeds, for what man is he does. Abraham loved Isaac, his son, yet stood ready to sacrifice his human sense of kinship to the true concept of the Father-Motherhood of God. So Marian had done. So Alden. With the sacrifice made—for true action is mental—Abraham joyfully realized that he could not be separated from God's idea and its expression. Again, a like sacrifice made, was this great truth made manifest to Marian and Alden.

When he entered the house his eyes fell upon the girl. He halted, and stepped back. She smiled and raised her arms. "Oh, thou Israel!" came softly from her trembling lips.

Tears rushed to his straining eyes, and with a glad cry he sprang forward and clasped the unresisting girl in his arms. . .

* * * * * * * *

The rector, dazed by it all, yet faithfully obedient to Marian's instruction, bent over his desk in the Roake offices and held suspicion at bay. Doctor Rowley, shaking with excitement, called perfunctorily on Doctor Roake and endured stoically an hour's grilling conversation in the latter's sanctum without revealing aught of significance, though he emerged wet with perspira-

tion. Doctor Roake had talked early with Alden by telephone, and had expressed an earnest desire that the young man come to his office for a larger talk and a better understanding. The morning papers were stuffed with lurid accounts of the great *dénouement* that crowded the convention news into obscure corners. Yet none was the wiser regarding Marian Whittier's presence in their midst. "For," she had counseled her little band, "our work is but just begun."

But when Benson, Rowley, and the rector demanded to know the next step, she shook her head. "It will be revealed," she said simply. Then, to Madam Galuth alone: "David Barach reports that Judge Calwin is still unconvinced. But I have a feeling that *something* will convince him, though I cannot say what it will be. But I know that we cannot be blocked at this point."

Late that morning Doctor Rowley received a summons to come to Benson's office at once. When he entered the latter's dingy little retreat he found his friend pacing the floor like a caged beast. "They've found him!" Benson cried. Then, snatching up his hat and coat, he seized Rowley's arm and dragged him away. "They've found him! Ted Sayor! They telephoned me from the morgue! Identification complete! He was found . . . frozen! Rushed to the morgue! Body not claimed. . ."

"Yes! Yes!"

"It was sent to the Municipal College of Medicine! . . . God, Rowley! it's in the . . ."

"Yes!"

"In . . . the . . . *vat!*" . . .

An hour later they sat again in Benson's office. Doctors Lann and Sale sat with them. And a deep hush lay upon them all.

Then Doctor Lann raised his head and spoke. "I . . . I am all but convinced by what you have told me," he said slowly. "If it is true . . . if it *is* . . . then I will join you in fighting him to the death!"

"And I am with you!" put in Doctor Sale. "But . . . proofs?"

"But I have outlined a way in which we may get our proof," said Benson. "Ah, gentlemen, I knew Ted Sayor. Out of love for the poor fellow, so foully done to death, I would gladly rescue his body and give it a decent burial. But Ted, though cynical of human hobbies, loved his fellow men. If he were here now I know he would say: 'Take my poor body. Do with it what you will, so be it that you use it against this incarnation of Satan that has been loosed in our midst'."

"But can it be done?" Sale questioned dubiously.

They looked at Lann. The latter sat for some time deep in thought. Then: "Yes, I believe it can. As you know, I am on the staff of the Municipal College of Medicine. Moreover, my son is a student there and a leader among the fellows. But . . ."

"You see," Benson hurried to interject, noting Lann's hesitation, "Roake's lecture to-night is not only to be a dramatic opening of the convention, but is to focus all eyes upon himself and make him the center of interest. This convention is a one-man affair, I insist. No matter how wonderfully a band may play, your eyes are bound to follow the clever drum major's stunts, eh? Now if . . ."

"But—assuming that it can be done—unless he is in a suitable mental state to be affected . . ." Doctor Lann began.

"Oh, as for that," Doctor Rowley offered, "I would say that he is. He has appeared extremely nervous of late. I would say that he has become apprehensive, fearful."

"You are right," Doctor Sale corroborated. "I have seen him start and turn pale at slight noises. And he seems to have grown irritable. I have wondered if his fine polish was beginning to wear thin."

"He's afraid, that's what's the matter with him!" Benson stoutly asserted. "The rector has told me things that prove it. Why, he has manifested fear of driveling old Senator Chaddock. . ."

"Eh? Is that so? H'm!"

"But what about Marian?" Rowley asked anxiously. "Would she approve?"

"We'll take this over Marian's head," said Benson grimly. "Besides, it may be the result of her work. We can't tell. You know, she instructed me to enlist Lann and Sale. She must have had some reason, eh?"

"Well," said Lann, consulting his watch and snapping the case, "if it's to be done we've no time to lose. Are we all agreed? Failure means . . ."

"I've cut that word out of my vocabulary since yesterday!" declared Doctor Benson. "Come, gentlemen! It is for humanity . . . and for poor Ted Sayor! Are you ready?"

The others rose with him. Quietly they gave their assent; then, with a brief word anent methods of immediate action, they dispersed.

* * * * * * * *

The formal opening of the great health-council, the assembling of the members of the unique religio-medical organization widely known as the "Roake plan", was scheduled to take place that evening, although for several days now the various

committees had been meeting, and plans and methods had been under vigorous discussion. These committee meetings were completely dominated by Doctor Roake. And the daring proposals made by this aggressive and competent leader brought from the delegates gasps and exclamations of amazement, of admiration, and sometimes of apprehension. Members of the State Legislature, invited to attend the discussion of health measures to be submitted to that body, sat at times open-mouthed, and yet admiring. The trend of the doctor's astonishing activities was toward the nationalization of the whole practice of medicine, though along unique lines of his own devising. The measure to grant state subsidies to physicians in rural districts was vigorously pushed in committee and before members of the Legislature. Industrial medicine was advanced along lines that placed the financial support of large bodies of doctors upon corporations and industries which were obliged by law to employ them. The plans unfolded by Doctor Roake were grandiose: they amounted in effect to the establishment of a dominant medical inquisition over every individual in the country. And they found acceptance for discussion in committee largely because Doctor Roake had so skillfully interwoven them with the solution of the problem of housing shortage, of the readjustment of returned soldiers, and other pressing problems. In furtherance of this, his plan called for a division of the country into medical regions, with physicians as appointive officers—in effect, governors—thereof. In conjunction therewith, ministers and priests would of course work in close collaboration, under a single superior, likewise appointive. The organization of all the doctors of the country, under himself as chief, was the preliminary step. And that now appeared to hinge upon the willingness of the national medical associations to join the Roake forces as a whole.

Throughout the discussions in committee the doctor was ubiquitous, always eager to hear any opposing voice, yet ever ready with counter-proposals to meet it. "His daring," Doctor Rowley remarked to Lann and Sale, "is as astonishing as his activity. And his name everywhere passes current for power. In one sense, he is wonderful; in another, terrible!"

And, further, Rowley had observed that Doctor Roake's daring appeared to have become augmented since Marian's return. "But certainly he cannot know that she is here," he said, in discussing it with Madam Galuth. And the woman had answered: "Look from him to the thought that is using him. *That* has been stirred by her very presence here, even though Doctor Roake knows not where she is. The carnal mind's awful daring in the presence of danger to itself is suicidal."

The rector found himself desperately driven; but he worked now with a zeal that he had never known before. His activities might have been criticized by Doctor Roake, had the latter had time to observe them. As it was, their perfunctoriness went unchallenged.

Mrs. Whittier and her social satellites labored with a lessened zest, due to disappointment over Alden's fate. "But I just *knew* that woman did it," she remarked, "for Alden was incapable of such a crime, else Ethel would never have married him. I brought this point up, you remember, in the Psychology Circle." And then her thought turned to important matters in hand. "Doctor Roake has set his foot down on free verse," she informed the members of the Culture Club. "He wants us to discuss the wrongs of Ireland. So you girls will have to hurry and prepare."

"But why the wrongs of Ireland? We're not interested."

"But he is. And that's enough."

Together with the committee meetings of the doctors and ministers there were preliminary meetings of the psychologists, of whom there were several of eminence present, and strange gatherings of those specially interested in hypnosis. To the latter Doctor Roake appeared to give marked attention. And it was noted that among those discussing this subject there were dark-skinned, turbaned orientals and men of decidedly foreign features and manners and speech.

Over the telephone Doctor Roake specially and in person invited Alden Cragg to attend the open forum sessions of the convention and to take what part in the discussions he might choose. And Alden turned to Marian and pressed her hand significantly. He had not needed the doctor's or her urging to enter the lists. . .

Again "Craggmont" blazed like a beacon above the illuminated town. The hotels overflowed. Gay motor parties dashed everywhere. Theaters and cabarets announced standing-room only. Music, laughter, and babble filled the air. Though the night was clear and cold, the streets were thronged. Those able to squeeze into the Glass theater did so early. And there, at eight o'clock sharp, in a speech admirable for its conciseness, and actually soporific in its urbanity, Doctor Roake cordially welcomed the delegates and guests to the great convention assembled for the public weal and extended them, by the courtesy of the mayor, the keys to the city.

In the quiet of the Galuth home Marian and Alden sat, awaiting their call. "We are ready, aren't we, Alden dear?" she said. "Oh, how wonderful are God's ways! Who could have outlined it all?"

"And you tell me that you have cabled Simeon Penberry to come? But why?"

"I have been spending his money," she answered. "I shall spend much more. I think he should know why. And then . . . then . . ." She paused and sat with a far-away look in her eyes. "I feel that he has a work here too. Oh, isn't it wonderful that I was led to him!"

"Yes," he replied, "as wonderful as that I should have been led to Madam Galuth."

She looked up at him quickly. "Do you know that her name means 'exile'? Oh, there is something back of that, I know! . . ."

In the dark and fearsome precincts of the Municipal College of Medicine Doctors Lann, Sale, and Rowley worked swiftly, silently, and with bated breath. It was a gruesome task that they were about, a daring deed, yet done in deepest respect for the one who silently worked with them, though days since he had yielded his life to the same awful mesmerism that now held this convention in its iron grip. . .

And then the doctors and scientists, men of authority and deep material lore, gathered dignifiedly in the large lecture hall of the Municipal College of Medicine for the clinic to be held by Doctor Roake and to hear the eminent doctor's latest pronouncement on the "white plague".

"Among three physicians, two atheists," whispered Doctor Rowley, slipping down beside Doctor Benson. "How many atheists here, do you think?" He was trembling with excitement—whistling, figuratively, to still his fear.

"All atheists," Benson answered in a shaking voice. "Lots of church members, but not one who knows God."

"And every one a rank materialist," said Rowley, "firmly holding to the fatally false belief that life and intelligence dwell in matter, and that matter is real and actual. A wisdom that is foolishness to God."

An outburst of cheering, prolonged for several minutes, greeted the appearance of Doctor Roake. He came forward, smiling and bowing, then stood with arms extended to the multitude as if he would embrace them all, and waited for the applause to cease. Then the room gradually became silent, and he began.

"The origin of germ disease," he said slowly and impressively in his deep, rich voice, "is lost in the immensity of time. Yet it had a definite beginning, for there is indubitable proof that disease did *not* exist in the earliest periods of the earth's history. Furthermore, it is now established that, quoting from the latest authority, *'disease has only been active during the last one-quarter of the earth's history'.*"

He paused, while a murmur of wonder rose throughout the hall. Then he smiled upon them again and resumed. "Our study of fossils shows that, while germs existed in the remotest periods, yet they were harmless . . ."

Doctor Rowley grasped Benson's arm. "Good heavens," he whispered, "can't he see the metaphysical significance of that fact? Why should they be harmful now?"

". . . and so we cannot state with scientific accuracy that disease originated with bacterial organisms. But we do almost certainly know that the earliest animal creatures were free from disease, and that infection of injuries to their bodies did *not* occur. Evidences of infected wounds are not found until after the Carboniferous Era. The earth had by that time lived three-quarters of its present age."

"Which means," Rowley murmured, "that error is now hastening to its doom."

"The earliest evidence of disease," the doctor continued, "is the action of parasites on shells. This resulted in the first tumors. When the races of animals began to grow weaker, disease began to make headway."

Again he paused. And again Rowley turned to whisper to Benson. "Marian would tell us that the communal mortal mind was finding itself unable to sustain its material creation not based on Principle. So it weakened, and dissolution through disease set in."

Again Doctor Roake took up the thread of his discourse. "From the evidences of pathology discovered on the fossil bones of primitive man we deduce that human beings acquired their diseases—at least some of them—from the animals. For example: men of the Stone Age, judging from their fossil remains, were afflicted with the same diseases as the cave-bear, then coexistent.

"But at a very early period immunity was established, and we are all but certain that great groups of animal creatures like the dinosaurs were not subject to disease, and that, barring accident and ravages from other animals, they lived to a great age, undisturbed, and certainly unmolested by twentieth-century germs."

A burst of applause interrupted him. Under its cover Doctor Rowley turned to Benson. "Did you get the significance of that?" he asked. "It is tantamount to an admission that the ancient patriarchs, like Methuselah, *did* live to vast ages. Did you get it?"

Doctor Roake advanced a step and held up a hand. "Gentlemen," he cried, "*that* was a golden era of animal content. It was a diseaseless, germless era. Why disease should have

appeared only in the last quarter of the earth's present geologic age is unanswerable . . ."

"He's mistaken," whispered Rowley. "For Marian has answered it."

". . . and why medicine should have been forced to struggle so long, so vainly, to return mankind to that germless age is likewise unaccountable. And yet we have taken one or two steps on the long road that leads back. It may be my privilege to-night to indicate another. But the steps, you will observe, are preventive. The germ must be exterminated before it begins its ravages. With typhus, diphtheria, and smallpox practically under our control, let us now investigate, and from the standpoint of its habitat, the organism responsible for the devastating scourge of tuberculosis."

While he had been speaking a table had been quietly rolled in, on which lay a white-sheeted figure, a human cadaver which the doctor would use in illustrating the anatomical aspects of his new theory. It was in charge of Doctor Lann's son and several students and interns. Doctor Benson gasped as he saw it and turned white. Rowley clutched his arm. His own face was ashen, and beads of perspiration stood out upon his forehead.

"Gentlemen," Doctor Roake pursued, stepping aside to permit the cadaver to be rolled forward, then taking a position beside it, "what is contagion? Actual transference of pathological germs, you will say. But you who are psychologists, and you who have gone deeply into the study of the subconscious mind, may return a different answer. Fear . . ."

Doctor Lann's son suddenly drew the white sheet back from the face and chest of the cadaver.

"Fear," Doctor Roake emphasized in a rising voice, "is the deadliest germ that attacks mankind."

He turned slightly to command his entire audience. "Gentlemen . . ."

His voice dropped. His gaze had fallen upon the dead face upturned to him. He stood transfixed, his eyes held by the awful thing.

A tremor ran through his frame. He pulled himself up and, as by a fearful effort, jerked up his head and looked out again over his waiting audience. "Gen . . ."

Again his head turned and his eyes crept back to that ghastly face. Slowly, almost imperceptibly, his body inclined toward it. Slowly, while the great hall held its breath, he turned about and bent over the thing, with his eyes protruding and staring into the waxen face.

Doctor Benson got to his feet, babbling incoherently. Row-

ley tried to pull him back. An age seemed to pass. Some of the audience started to rise. . .

Then they froze with horror. For, with a harsh, rasping noise issuing from his gaping mouth, Doctor Roake had crumpled up on the floor.

CHAPTER 21

IN the confusion incident upon the doctor's collapse, Doctor Lann hurried forward to take command of the situation. Doctor Roake, failing to recover consciousness, was rushed to the college hospital. Rowley and Benson, the latter wild with excitement, at once issued orders, on the authority which they had previously obtained, for securing the remains of Ted Sayor and conveying them to an undertaker for subsequent burial. "He's done his part, has poor Ted!" Benson muttered repeatedly. "He's taken his revenge! Roake's done for! Lord in heaven, how it worked!"

Crestelridge stood aghast at the report that Doctor Roake had collapsed during his opening lecture. It blenched when it learned that he had fallen beneath the table on which lay the body of Ted Sayor. "*Ted Sayor!*" society gasped. "What a horrible end! What a shocking coincidence, that the doctor should be overcome at sight of his lost friend's body there!"

And then Crestelridge started at its own dark question: "But what had previously happened to Ted Sayor? How came his body *there?*"

"That question shall be answered," Doctor Rowley said to those who, he was certain, would spread his words widely.

"It shall be answered!" Crestelridge echoed. "But *when?*"

And Doctor Lann said then: "When Doctor Roake recovers sufficiently to explain."

Doctor Roake! *Explain!* Crestelridge almost burst with its surfeit of emotions. Throughout the night wild rumors, conflicting reports, and weird speculations ran riot. Doctor Proast, president of the faculty of the Municipal College of Medicine, was driven to launch an investigation, on the suspicion that malicious trickery had been employed by enemies of Doctor Roake. Convention delegates and guests ran hither and yon like disturbed ants. "What will become of the convention?" was heard on all sides, "for without Doctor Roake's guidance it will be like a ship without compass!"

Then came the bulletin that Doctor Roake had recovered consciousness—that he had been removed to "Craggmont"—that he had lapsed into delirium—that he was gravely ill!

Benson and Rowley, leaving the faithful Boots watching in sorrow beside the body of his master in the undertaker's room, sped to Madam Galuth's with the news. "We've got him!" Benson shouted. "It confirms everything!" But his voice fell when he caught Marian's reproving look. "Of course," he ruefully admitted, "I don't mean to deal in personalities. It isn't Roake, but . . . Oh, hang it all! I say, we've *got* him!"

Marian patiently heard his lurid account of the event. Then, without comment, she went to her room. A half hour later she descended and called David Barach by 'phone. "See Judge Calwin at once," she bade the man. When she concluded her instructions, she turned to hear the rector's further report. For the latter had just come from "Craggmont". "In a lucid interval," the rector said, struggling for calm, "he requested that the convention proceed according to schedule, and under the direction of Doctor Proast! But Doctor Proast is so shaken that he has asked Doctor Lann to substitute for him!"

Again telephoned messages sped between Marian and David Barach. Then the girl summoned her knights and bade them equip for the lists. "Judge Calwin is on his way here with David Barach," she informed them. "He will spend the night with us, hearing our arguments. If he is then convinced, he will go into the convention to-morrow."

"He will be convinced," Madam Galuth answered her. And to the others: "I know him well. He has handled much business for me. I have talked with him often and long on the subjects in which we are so vitally interested. He is already convinced, and he is coming to tell us so."

"And the Prosecuting Attorney?" the rector queried.

"He is a Jew, and a close friend of David Barach. David has won him."

Doctor Benson was sputtering with excitement. "I don't deal with personalities, y' understand, but I want to say . . . this girl . . . Marian . . . she . . . not she, but . . . I . . . y' understand. . ."

"We *do* understand, Doctor," said Marian, taking his hand. "And it is wonderful, isn't it?" What the girl's thought regarding Ted Sayor was she did not say. But later, when alone with Madam Galuth, she whispered: "The despised things, and the things considered of no account, God uses to overthrow the mighty. Dear Ted was used, even though not as we would have outlined. He is in God's hands."

In the solemn hush of "Craggmont" that night the great doctor lay tossing in delirium, with his skilled confrères bending anxiously over him. In Madam Galuth's little cottage Marian Whittier sat before Judge Calwin, of international fame,

and pled humanity's cause. "I think I understand you," he said at length. "For example, a man commits a crime, and the State hangs him. The ends of justice have not been met, for the real criminal remains still unpunished, since the real criminal is the idea—or set of ideas—that used the man and caused him to commit the crime. These ideas, in a sense, really constitute the man. But they are not reached by hanging him. To prevent similar crime, the criminal ideas themselves must be exposed and destroyed. Similarly, you would remove all thought of personality from this convention, and would deal directly with the ideas underlying it. I see. I see. H'm!

"Of course," he went on, after a pause, "dealing for the moment with personality, if we suspected Doctor Roake of crimes committed, not directly, but through others by mental suggestion, voiced or unvoiced, we could probably not attach any crime to him. For the uttering of words or sentiments alone he could not be held a criminal, however much he might in fact be one. It is only where we could show that his utterances incited to crime that he could be indicted with the principal as accessory before the fact. And yet, in truth, he would be the real principal, not the one who, by his suggestion, committed the criminal act. For example: the words which Dr. Harris Chaddock spoke to David Barach caused the latter to follow Alden Cragg to Europe to kill him. But who was the real criminal? On the other hand, who suggested the thing to Harris Chaddock? His father, the senator, according to what Harris told Barach. But Harris referred to Doctor Roake as the propounder of the idea to his father. Therefore, for the crime which David Barach sought to perpetrate against Alden Cragg, Doctor Roake was *directly* responsible. He was the real criminal. But, under our laws, we could not reach him."

"But in reality, Judge," the girl answered, "Doctor Roake is *not* the criminal. Animal magnetism committed all the crimes, using him as a channel. To destroy the channel would not prevent further crime. Crime will never be eradicated by hangings, but only by that exposure and real education which destroys the criminal ideas. To arrest the members of this convention would accomplish nothing. But to expose the false ideas underlying it to the withering rays of Truth will save the members themselves and the thousands of potential victims who would be affected by the tyranny and domination which the Roake organization, through its convention, proposes to exert. This convention is the tool of malicious animal magnetism. Now if we can reverse it, and bring about, in the convention itself, an enlightened exposure and discussion of the deadly workings of this illusive thing; if we can influence

the attending members of the Legislature to deal with it without restraint; if we can bring about the recognition of its nature and effects by judicial bodies, we shall have saved countless thousands—whereas hanging every member of the organization would not accomplish a thing!"

"But they will refuse to discuss it," the judge objected.

"Humanity has been strangely backward about discussing this thing that has done them such incalculable harm. But that is the nature of its effects. It hypnotizes its victims and causes this very reluctance, then makes them its channels for crime. Yet Truth is omnipotent against it. We, reflecting Truth, will discuss it fearlessly before the convention."

When day dawned Doctor Roake lay asleep under the freely administered narcotics, while on the marble steps without huddled Senator Chaddock, mumbling as he awaited his master's delayed coming. With the break of day Judge Calwin announced that he had formed his opinion. And later, while Marian was in the little kitchen assisting Madam Galuth to prepare breakfast, he said to the men who sat gathered about him: "In her presence I am wax; yet I know that she has molded me aright. She has demanded that I do the most audacious thing of my long career—it may dash my prestige and drive me from the bench. Yet I have imbibed a portion of her own wonderful courage. Gentlemen, because I am convinced that she is right, I would go to the lions!"

"By the Lord, so would I!" burst from Benson. . .

In a fever of excitement, and played upon by forces which they could neither recognize nor trace, the delegates swarmed into the Glass theater at nine that morning in response to their temporary chairman's call. In a trembling voice Doctor Proast called them to order, then referred to the sudden illness of Doctor Roake, "due," he said, "to over-work in behalf of suffering humanity", and announced that, compliant with the wishes of their beloved leader, the convention would proceed with its program, under the guidance of Doctor Lann. Followed then the brief ceremony of inducting Doctor Lann, after which the latter called upon the Reverend Wilson Whittier to open the session with an invocation to Almighty God.

On one side of the great theater and its balconies and galleries were gathered the clergymen; on the other the physicians. The rector sat for a moment with closed eyes. Then, pale, but with firm step, he walked to the front of the stage and stood before the multitude.

"Our Father which art in heaven . . ."

Some raised their heads: *that* voice was not the rector's!

"Father-Mother, divine Spirit, infinite Consideration, hal-

lowed shall be Thy name by those who, as yet, see not, because of the mesmerism of the carnal mind, that this is a place that Thou alone possessest.

"Thy kingdom *is* come, for Thy work is finished, and Thou didst pronounce it good. Then error's false claims of substance in matter vanish as suppositions of unprincipled thought."

More heads came up. What ailed the rector, whose public prayers were ever grandiloquent perorations of sound advice and excellent counsel to the Almighty?

"Thou sole Cause and Creator, omniactive, Thy will *is* done throughout Thy infinite Creation. What is loosed in heaven is loosed, by that very fact, on its suppositional opposite, earth, and we are free of the bonds of belief of life and intelligence in matter.

"Thy work is done, and because thereof the bread of understanding is broken to feed our yearning for Truth.

"Because Thou art Love, suppositional hatred rises with infinite seeming claims to oppose Thee. Yet, reflecting Thee in love, we have no enemies. That which we would forgive, and for which ask forgiveness, does not in fact exist.

"Into temptation nor Thou, nor aught else, canst lead us. Error's mesmerism is but the lie that we need not believe. Thy deliverance is ever at hand, for error's seeming assaults are but opportunities to prove Thee All. To spiritually understand Thee is deliverance from every effect of ignorant belief in the power and presence of evil.

"For Thou art All and omnipresent. Thy Creation is spiritual and all-inclusive. Thou art omnipotent and deathless Life. Therefore the suppositional communal mortal mind's false claims of substance, life, and sensation in matter hold nor place nor power. Healing is alone of Thee, nor can proceed from senseless drugs or the brews of mortal mind. Health is wholeness, and is alone of Thee. Death is the lie about Life, and is destroyed by Truth. Salvation is alone of Thee, nor is from a literal hell to an equally material heaven. For heaven is Mind. And always and ever we dwell, in reality, therein, in Thy consideration."

Stares followed him as he turned and went back to his chair. The clergymen looked from him to one another in questioning perplexity. Was that a prayer—*that?* That unorthodox, unevangelical jumble? He had told the Lord nothing! He had not asked the Almighty to cure and restore their leader, nor to bless them and prosper the convention! He had simply made assertions. . .

A slight commotion at the entrance drew their attention. An usher was seen bearing a card to the chairman. Doctor

Lann took it, and at once gave the usher instructions. Thereupon several strangers were admitted to the hall and conducted to the stage.

"It's Judge Calwin!" someone exclaimed under his breath.

"What right has he here?" demanded others. "He's the sharpest man on the bench; he means trouble!"

"That fellow with him is David Barach! He's back from the war!"

And there were some who noted that neither Doctor Lann nor the rector appeared surprised at the intrusion.

Judge Calwin advanced at once to the front of the stage and raised a hand to quiet the stir. "Gentlemen," he said, "there has appeared in my court one who, coming in the name of the people, has uttered grave charges against that institution popularly known as the Roake organization, and has demanded that this convention be enjoined from further activity in promulgation of the business of that organization until those charges shall have been duly investigated."

Some of the delegates got to their feet. Doctor Lann rapped loudly for order, and motioned to the judge to proceed.

"I had thought, on hearing the charges," the judge continued, "to summon your Executive Committee into court to show cause why this convention should not be enjoined. Yet that were of itself unjust, since every delegate is equally affected by them. Manifestly, I could not hale the entire convention into court. Therefore, rather than issue the injunction upon the charges adduced, it appeared to me more considerate of you to come before you in person—to transfer, as it were, my court to this hall, on the ground that where the judge is there is the court."

"It's a trick!" called a loud voice.

"What are you putting over on us?"

The judge stood until the cries had subsided, then proceeded without perturbation. "I have been sufficiently considerate of your feelings to come to you for your coöperation in meeting these very serious charges. If, however, this is distasteful to you, then I shall return and issue the injunction without further deliberation, naming a future date, convenient to me, for the hearing. I leave this to your choice."

The house sat back speechless with amaze. They were trapped. Doctor Lann came forward. "Gentlemen," he called, "act wisely! Your reputation is at stake! You cannot brook delay! I call upon the members of the Executive Committee to accept, by a standing vote, the judge's considerate proposal that the convention be turned over to him for a brief period for the purpose of establishing here his court to consider the charges on which an injunction has been demanded!"

Every member of the Executive Committee rose to his feet. Doctor Lann turned to the judge, bowed, and waved a hand indicative of the convention's entire compliance.

So swiftly had the *coup* been effected that the delegates sat open-mouthed. Then they stiffened for resistance. But the judge was again speaking.

"I realize that I am departing from precedent," he declared. "But I shall still further deviate from hoary custom in this hearing. For I am not come to try you, either as individuals or as an assembly of persons: *I am come to arrest and try the ideas upon which the so-called Roake organization is based!*"

"It is unheard of!" came from someone.

The judge's gavel crashed down upon the desk before him. "I shall not remind you again that, by consent of your Executive Committee, the Court is sitting," he declared significantly. "It *is* unheard of," he went on calmly. "Yet the time has come for courageous action as yet unheard of because no one has ever dared take such a stand for the right. To those of you who may demand that an injunction be secured to dissolve this court, I now grant you permission to leave this hall for that purpose. To those who would appeal to the city or state authorities, to the governor, to the militia, I tell you now to go. Yet shall I continue to hold my court, for, I repeat, I am not trying persons, but *ideas.* Despite all efforts of the enemies of Truth, the ideas underlying the Roake plan *shall be tried!* For the people have the indisputable right to know what those ideas are and what their intent and effect upon them."

Doctor Lann sprang to his feet. "Your Honor," he cried, "every honest doctor and every self-respecting clergyman in this hall will remain! The others, if others there be, will leave! And we shall be well rid of those who go!"

The judge stood waiting. Every man remained seated, though gaping. The judge smiled and proceeded.

"David Barach, in support of your charge that the ideas underlying the Roake plan are subversive of popular government, you may address the Court."

CHAPTER 22

DAVID BARACH strode out before the people. With his keen eyes he swept them, then he bowed to the judge. "Your Honor," he said—and his voice filled the great room—"I come back to these people from the battlefields of Europe, where I fought for their freedom, to find them bowing

their necks to an autocracy no less gigantic, no less inimical, than the one which I aided in destroying. An autocracy that, because of its deceptive religio-medical character, will, if not overthrown, *dominate the spiritual nature as well as the physical body of every individual of this great nation!* Oh, you doctors, you ministers of the Word," turning to the audience, "while two millions of your youth were offering their lives for you overseas, you have been feeding this octopus for their enslavement when they should return!

"Your leader chose well his time—an hour when war-born despotism was at its height, when men's overwrought mentalities were most receptive to error, when spiritual ignorance was deepest. What though you boasted your colleges and your great learning: the average of the world's mentality is, by your own statistics, shown to be but that of a *ten-year-old child!* Such mentalities, he well knew, become ready slaves. He cannily chose the hour when the people at home were required to surrender most to the demands of war. Then he boldly invaded your homes, closed your churches, and laid you under such enslaving restrictions as the iniquitous Wess law! Already, to my certain knowledge, lives have been sacrificed to that accursed law, lives despoiled, lives ruined. Yet here in convention assembled you are about to demand that a hundred million people shall come under it! He and you are victims of the mesmerism that drove the blinded Kaiser to his ruin!

"How, the people ask, was this diabolical system devised? For years he has been working . . . Yet, not he, but the *ideas* on which the Roake plan are based, and which, years gone, laid hold upon him. And he fell before their allurement, nor would shake them off. These informed him that, beginning with the child and playing upon its own and its parents' fears, thus poisoning the fountain at its source; through school inspection and tutelage, then through press and text-books; through the insurance companies; through the physicians who should talk disease and serums and sanitariums and compulsory methods of immunizing; through health boards of his own creating that controlled physicians; through the great machine which he at last constructed; through drives upon legislatures and congresses—thus did his campaign go forward for domination of the American people, for ultimate domination of the world-consciousness!

"Did *materia medica* acquire the power he sought for it? *Five million American soldiers and sailors were forced—without respect to their sentiments—to submit their bodies to vaccines and serums!* A medical power so vast that Great Britain gasped at thought of it. For England did not dare inject this

stuff into the bodies of her men. The English doctors tried it, but jealousy for Magna Charta rose like a lion and put them to rout! The Englishman, unlike the American, prizes the liberty for which he has bled.

"Such great victories won, he saw to it that compulsory examination was followed by enforced medication. The school nurse now dogs the child into the home to see that the doctor's orders are obeyed, disobedience to which entails fines and imprisonment. And who are these doctors who thus indiscriminately order operations or serumizing? Medical politicians. And politicians are not as a rule experienced or efficient, not always honest—not always! Their thought is not immune to the fat salaries, to the preferment, to the power and prestige which an ignorant people accord them. I do not arraign the honest physician; but the medical politician, skilled or unskilled, is the Bolshevist loosed in our land! In times of epidemic, such as we have just witnessed, he invokes police power; he wilfully or ignorantly sends hundreds to the grave by fright; he cannot heal, but he closes the churches even while he predicts the return of the ravager, and lays the foundations of new laws to increase his power. No person or thing—not even God himself—is forced so assiduously and insistently upon the public to-day as the physician! Though states may by law permit healing by mental or spiritual means, yet the physician demands that he be at the birth or death of every individual, and insists that a death without his ubiquitous presence shall be deemed manslaughter! His persecution of the school child is now such as to raise the question as to whether the child or the school shall be regarded as public!

"Your Honor, the Constitution of these United States provides for the security of the citizen in his home against unreasonable seizures. Yet not the Supreme Court, but the doctor, interprets that clause. Thus is the government no longer by the people for the people, but by medical legislation for the political doctor! It is upon such fallacious interpretation that the Roake plan rests.

"There are physicians here present who will admit that, but for the people's educated faith in drugs, serums, and vaccines, these remedies must ever fail. Such material education is in the highest sense anti-Christian, for it teaches the people dependence on matter, thus turning them away from their God, although such material dependence leads inevitably to the continuance of disease and ultimate death. Such dependence is rankly atheistic. Yet these ministers here are subscribing to it! In God's name, what are they thinking of?

"Medical autocracy, as now exemplified in the activities of

the Roake plan, began stealthily, years ago, and in the specious guise of benevolence. It showed its head first in the demand for appropriations of state funds to send indigent persons who had been bitten by 'mad dogs' to Pasteur institutes. The way opened, state funds were then demanded for the purchase of vaccines and serums for the poor. Then vaccination was foisted upon the people—and physician and druggist waxed fat. Soon other disease were 'discovered' amenable to serums. And the people's faith in them worked cures. The propaganda was widely spread by the patent-medicine man, and the terrors he inspired made fat our graveyards! The propaganda is still spread, though in changed form. The newspapers have their 'health-columns' and their advices from 'health-bureaus'. And the mesmerized people yield themselves to this self-asserted 'authority' and bind themselves with the doctor's unbreakable chains. Legislatures are coerced by the Roake organization to take liberties that a king would not dare assume. The state is being forced by the ideas underlying the Roake plan to become a gigantic parent. It is being rendered despotic, that it may eventually seize upon all children and make them its charge. The poor have lost control over the destinies of themselves and their families; the rich yield it voluntarily, and join in actively persecuting the poor and harassing them into hospitals and asylums under the domination of the political doctor. In fine, there never was an hour when the people were so assiduously exploited from the merely physical standpoint as to-day—a standpoint that renders God a nonentity. And yet, oh, you ministers, you subscribe to it! You are aiding and abetting a medical inquisition that judges even God!

"But the doctors cure, you protest. Alas! your mesmerism is complete. Let me quote, Your Honor, from an authority which I will furnish on request. 'Medicine, so-called, regular and scientific, lamentably failed in the army, where it has been and is in absolute control. It not only failed to prevent disease —witness the more than 3,000,000 admissions to the sick report—but the practices it is directly responsible for, the alleged prophylactic inoculations, must logically be credited with a large part of such diseases, with some part of the more than 50,000 deaths from disease, the 129,000 men, physical wrecks many of them, discharged from the army because of disease contracted in the service. So the individual's independence, in the event that he yields to the blandishments of the medical lobby, is bartered for more disease, more deaths from disease and an increase in the amount of human wreckage, mental and physical, with which society is compelled to cope at this time. On that score alone he would be compelled

to reject all overtures from the autocratic clique that claims to speak for American medicine, and will demand that rights taken from him shall be restored in order that he may once again stand forth as a free man in full possession of his own person, in sickness, and in health.'

"Your Honor, practically the entire medical profession of the United States became the medical department of the army and navy during the world-war. Never has *materia medica* had such an opportunity. Never has a greater failure been recorded. Yet the Roake organization embodies all the ideas of *materia medica* as accepted and practiced to-day. Upon the records just cited it stands condemned. Yet with these ideas it demands the domination of mankind!

"Prior to the formulating of our Constitution there was never a government that worked really well. That Constitution is now regarded as the first step in true government that the world has ever known. Its animus is liberty. Yet I declare to you that the autocracy of the Roake plan would render the Constitution null and void, and set up a political tyranny that would make of the American people a nation of invalided, dispirited, godless slaves!

"The Roake plan lives on disease! Yet it demands the so-called guardianship of this nation's health! It demands that the State adjudge parents murderers! Yet the ideas underlying it are of themselves assassins of the most subtle type! Your Honor, the life of the nation is here at stake! I charge that the ideas basing the Roake plan, and in promulgation of which this convention is called, are subversive of popular government, as provided by the Constitution of the United States! I charge that their intent and result is the enslavement of the human mind, and the establishment of an absolute religio-political autocracy over the lives of the people! I charge that these ideas are not only basely anti-Christian, despite the fact that a hundred clergymen sitting here have subscribed to them, but that they lead, and in provable cases have already led, to malicious mental control, to theft, and to murder!"

Men from all over the hall were on their feet. The judge rapped with his gavel and bade them be seated. "Your Honor," called Doctor Proast, coming forward, "Doctor Roake's character has been attacked, and he is ill and unable to defend himself!"

"I have not attacked his character, Your Honor," answered Barach. "I have but called attention to some of the ideas upon which this organization has been built. My sympathy goes out to Doctor Roake, himself a victim, for those evil ideas have worked through him to rob, to steal, and to kill!"

"In the name of this convention, I demand an explanation!" Doctor Proast cried. "It is a conspiracy! Doctor Roake was tricked last night! To-day, in his enforced absence, he is assailed! From the Reverend Wilson Whittier's opening prayer there has been trickery! . . ."

The rector rose and came forward. "Your Honor," he said, speaking with suppressed emotion, "that I may not appear in the hypocrite's rôle, permit me to speak to these people."

The judge called for order—an unnecessary call, for the people, at sight of the rector about to address them, sank back in their seats with eyes riveted upon him.

CHAPTER 23

"OH, my friends!" cried the rector. It was a wail. It was a rending appeal. "It is finished!" He held out his arms to them. "I yield my membership in this religio-medical organization. A people's health is a function of its idea of God. But God is unknown to the Roake plan."

Dead silence lay upon the assemblage. They might have been painted images, all.

"I purposed to assemble with you here in the sacred name of healing. I knew not then—I refused to know—that naught but the recognition of God as All confers the only healing power. Belief in the reality of matter and the power of evil —though I knew it not—renders true healing impossible. The Christ is the true healer. The Roake plan, holding that evil is power, holding that matter is valid and living—that living, it suffers, and that in senseless drugs it cures—and holding that death destroys life, is anti-Christ!"

Again he paused. His great audience sat as if cast in a single mold, stunned by that which they were hearing. He looked upward, as if for strength. His face was pale. His forehead was wet. Then he drew a deep sigh and went on.

"Oh, thank God that His chastening has broken the mesmeric spell! Because of it, traditional theology has now no further meaning for me. Time was when I held that the conferring of my theological degree dropped likewise the mantle of Elijah about my shoulders. Alas! I have learned that it was not Elijah's mantle, but the smothering garment of material belief that fell upon me. Only in these last days has it been lifted from my head. Looking out from under it, I see . . . God.

"How could I have missed the paramount test of Scriptural

interpretation, which is the ability scientifically to heal the sick! Even the layman who turns the sacred pages inquires how it is possible that we preachers should lose sight of the Bible passages relating to bodily healing without also losing faith in all else that the Master taught, for so closely knit are they that to abandon belief in one necessitates yielding faith in the other. . .

"Ah, friends, my faith was not in God, Spirit, but in His suppositional opposite, matter! And so, as the theologians for centuries have done, I read my Bible without any proof that I had grasped the healing message of the Christ. Nay, rather did I read into it the false claims of *materia medica*, and the arrogant assumptions of the political doctor!

"For years I preached from my pulpit my own limited, unintelligent, utterly undemonstrable human opinions of the Word, and filled the hiatus of my spiritual ignorance with a pagan ritualism, meaningless and tawdry. With no sense of the unreality of mortal existence; with no appreciation of the sole reality of Spirit, Mind, and its infinite spiritual manifestation; and utterly without wisdom to extract from the Bible its transcendent meaning, I complaisantly gave the Word literally, without separation of the wheat from the tares. The result has been chaos to my flock and to me.

"Ah, I knew not that matter contradicts Spirit—and I dearly loved the pleasant things of matter! I did not know—I would not know—that to yield one's belief to its claims is to break the First Commandment. For matter and the flesh are one. It does not inherit heaven, harmony, as I have so bitterly learned.

"My mesmeric determination to hold Spirit in the grasp of matter allied me with the Roake plan. The devil of personal sense quoted Scripture to Jesus, likewise to me. But *I* yielded. Thenceforth error preached from my pulpit. The Son of man was not lifted above the belief of intelligent matter when I spoke. No demarcation was drawn between Mind and matter when I preached. No distinction was made between the real and unreal.

"It was because God was unreal to me, and matter and mortal mind the only realities. Though in theory I regarded Him omnipotent, yet in practice I followed the world and rendered homage to the belief of the tremendous power of evil. I regarded sickness as far more powerful than health, and death than life.

"My attitude in shunning the Master's command to heal the sick as he did is the attitude of the great body of the clergy to-day. It was a shameful admission that I was too densely material in thought, too poor in spirit, to heal. I followed with

my fellow clergymen in the footsteps of the Christians of the fourth century and, yielding to the blandishments of the politicians, bartered the Christ for a mess of material pottage called 'natural science'. Organized religion does not recognize the commission given by the founder of Christianity to heal the sick by spiritual means, but relegates that great privilege and test of spiritual understanding to a solidly materialistic medical profession, whose members are more or less atheistic!

"Oh, my brothers, our attitude of opposition to every effort of others to restore primitive Christianity and the scientifically Christian method of healing as practiced and taught by Jesus is cowardly, traitorous, criminal! Because of it we are repudiated by the people and are forced to yield homage to such as the Roake plan! Shame on us! Shame! Shame!

"Alas! because of my dense materialism was I chosen to lead you ministers of the Word in this iniquitous organization. Fear drove me! But in these last days courage has been given me. Looking back now in horror along the road which the Roake plan has traveled, I cry to God to forgive my part in it by destroying the evil that used me! Mesmerism, witchcraft, and diabolism are the elements comprising this plan! Suggestion, aggressively mental or subtly voiced, is its mode! And you and I and the world are its victims!

"To the world I charge that the Roake plan is based solely on the deadly beliefs of life, substance, and intelligence in matter! That it accords all power to evil! That it denies God! That its animus is the 'Prince of this world', animal magnetism! Its effects: degradation, sloth, slavery of body and mind, and death! And you and I have been summoned here to waft its lethal gas abroad over an unsuspecting and defenseless world! In God's name I denounce it and renounce it. In His name I release myself from its material strictures to acquire a knowledge of Life! In His name I sever the material ties which bound me to it and to the organized theology which led me into it! I yield now the rectorship of St. Jude's, knowing that because of this public confession that church, with its treasured traditions, will cast me out! But I break now with organized religion! I break with stupefying tradition! Like Abraham, I set out this day from idolatrous Ur to find God! And yet I step forth from the deadening human limitations of theology and materialism in the first sense of freedom that has ever been mine!"

Exclamations burst from all parts of the hall as the rector turned and walked steadily back to his chair. Judge Calwin rapped loudly and long for order. In the confusion some escaped the hall and rushed to telephones to report the revolu-

tionary proceedings to "Craggmont" and to the press. The convention, they declared, had been seized and reversed, and by the enemies of Doctor Roake! St. Jude's had been publicly insulted!

In the uproar a clergyman of prominence arose and called to the judge. "Your Honor, we clergymen demand a hearing!"

The people, recognizing the eminent gentleman, became quiet and expectant. The judge at once accorded him recognition.

"Words fail me to express my astonishment at the Reverend Wilson Whittier's sudden reversal of his position! His public repudiation of the movement of which he was a trusted leader, and his incomprehensible attack upon his brother clergymen, give rise to suspicion of treachery, or suggestions of a sudden loss of mental balance! But, passing that, I ask if you likewise hold that we should regard God's material creation as evil, and that we must on that undemonstrable assumption, denounce the Roake plan as iniquitous?"

"Before announcing my opinion," the judge replied, "I shall ask for the views of a material scientist and physician on the question. Doctor Rowley, it is charged that the Roake organization is based wholly on materialistic ideas, and that, because evil and matter are in essence one, the Roake plan is essentially evil. Kindly give the Court your testimony on the nature of matter."

Doctor Rowley's thought flew back to his hours with Marian and Alden, and he inaudibly voiced a prayer for wisdom. Then, as he stood before the convention, he remembered that the pebble which felled Goliath struck the giant on the head, the supposed seat of the belief of life and intelligence in matter.

CHAPTER 24

"YOUR HONOR," Doctor Rowley began, "were I to tell the reverend gentleman that he does not see me, even though, as he supposes, he is looking directly at me, he might vigorously protest. And yet I speak truth. He sees not me, but *a mental concept* of me, wholly within himself. He sees not me, but is humanly conscious of an image of thought within his own mentality and which he declares to be man, created by God in His likeness. And this quite regardless of the fact that that image which he is beholding is fleeting, unstable, constantly changing, now manifesting health, now disease, and always disintegrating, always waxing old and senile, until it at last

disappears quite. Yet what changes? What disappears? I repeat, his mental concept, which he has called *me*.

"That mental concept is known to him as a fusion of mind and matter. Of the real essence of either he has not the slightest knowledge. He knows them only by their effects, their phenomena. He does not realize that this mental concept which he calls *me* passes out of his consciousness because it is unreal and has no basis of Principle on which to exist and endure. He is not aware that it is in no sense Man.

"A text-book of Physics widely used in our colleges treats the subject of matter thus: '*Matter makes itself known to us by the testimony of the senses. We see it, hear it, smell it, taste it, touch it. But observe, that, after all, this is indirect testimony. We see, hear, taste, smell, touch, in our consciousness only. We cannot assert therefore that matter exists apart from this consciousness. Science has nothing to say about the ultimate nature of matter. Science studies matter simply as a fact of human experience. We are not concerned in physics with what things really are, but solely with their properties and behavior. Physics neither offers nor seeks an explanation of the universe. It leaves all such problems to metaphysics.*'

"Thus natural science admits that we see, hear, taste, smell, and touch matter only in consciousness. But in order to get into consciousness, which is a mental realm, matter must of itself be mental.

"That the universe is infinite is generally admitted. Likewise that it was 'created', or revealed. It is being quite generally admitted that the intelligence capable of revealing an infinite universe must itself be infinite mind. An infinite mind is *absolutely* comprehensive. On that basis, we and all with which we have to do must be mental. Therefore, human experience must be wholly on a mental plane.

"Then, since natural science studies matter simply as a fact of human experience, and human experience is wholly mental, matter is a mental thing.

"Matter, then, is admittedly a phenomenon of human consciousness. But as cessation of thinking results in lapse of consciousness, consciousness must be regarded as a function of the activity of thought. Therefore matter becomes *a thing of thought!*

"But is it possible for men to *think* matter into existence? No, for men do not think. Therefore, man is not a creator. Thought alone does the thinking, by the active presentation of itself. By this activity it constructs a recognition, or consciousness, of thought-images in varying degrees of activity, which it calls the material universe and man. The quality of this

consciousness, whether harmonious or discordant, real or unreal, depends upon the source of the thought composing it. A well man is a humanly conscious sense of harmony. A sick man is a consciousness of discord. Both conditions are wholly mental. Both are the result of thought's active presentation of itself and its ability to simulate Truth.

"Were I to ask the reverend gentleman what evidence he has of the existence of matter, he would doubtless cite the testimony of his five physical senses. But investigators on a physical basis are now contending that there are many more than the five so-called senses. There are the senses of heat, of motion, of cold. There is the sense of time.

"Moreover, investigators now inform us that the physical senses are by no means so differentiated from one another as has been supposed. They are found to be so closely related one to another that they actually merge into a single unified sense, that of perception. And perception is *wholly mental.* It is human limitation alone that has restricted mankind to dependence on the so-called five physical senses for knowledge. Even on the strictly material basis, it is discovered that under certain conditions any part of the human skin may become sensitive to light in the same manner as the retina of the eye. Why, then, should man not see from every portion of the body? In case of loss of the eyes, why should he not—on the above basis—see from any part of his skin? Why, indeed, is he limited to the body at all for perception? It is reported that the potentialities of more highly specialized senses have been discovered in the functions of the ordinary nerve-terminals in the skin. Even on the wholly physical basis it is seen that the limitations imposed upon mankind are removable. Human knowledge is in a state of flux, seeking Truth. For true perception is the unlimited understanding of Truth.

"Physical science informs us that about 85 per cent of the testimony regarding the existence of matter is afforded by the sense of sight. Human sight depends upon light. Light—of the real nature of which nothing is known—passes by reflection from the observed object through the lenses and humors of the physical eye and forms an inverted image upon the retina. Or in some unexplained manner, and as a result of the presence of light, ether waves of varying lengths are sent out from or reflected by material objects, and produce the same result. Since the ether is postulated as penetrating all material substance, transverse vibrations are supposedly set up in it by some of the revolving electrons thought to constitute the units of matter, and these form waves of different lengths which,

by impact upon the retina, give rise to the sensations of color. In any case, sight is regarded as conditioned by matter—although matter is now generally considered electrical in composition. Then the optic nerve, through excitation, is supposed to transmit the received impressions to the brain, regarded as the seat of consciousness. Thereupon the human mind, from this information—which is in no sense true data, but mere assumption—supposedly derives its impression of the existence and qualities of the object under observation. By such a peculiar, even ridiculous, process it is supposed to acquire its knowledge of an outside world.

"Your Honor, I may safely say that you would never admit such evidence in your court. Were I to inform you that a man is ill, and demand that he be compelled to endure my medical treatment, basing my evidence on testimony regarding him which I admit to have been sent by an intangible thing called light, through a fleshly contrivance called an eye, and thence transmitted along a fleshly thread of minute diameter and called a nerve, and finally confessing that not the image thrown upon the retina was transferred to the brain, but merely a vibration of this slender thread of flesh, and that my deduction was made from this unintelligible vibration which did not reach the mind at all, unless the mind was lurking around in the brain waiting for the thread of flesh to vibrate—I repeat, were I to rest my case on such unfounded testimony you would rightly throw the case out of court! Yet on no truer evidence does the Roake plan condemn mortal man to the tyranny of medical politicians, quite oblivious of the fact that man is a consciousness, and that his consciousness of inharmony is due to his own acceptance of false thought, and may be cured by exchanging that false thought for the true.

"What, then, is the fact? This: the testimony supposed to be derived through the physical senses, and from which we think we get our idea of a world outside of ourselves, can consist of nothing more than a lot of disconnected vibrations; and anything that the mind may infer from these vibrations is inferred *without any outside authority whatsoever.* Man, as a consciousness, embraces his universe in himself as a compound mental thing cognized. Man, as mind, is forced to admit that he knows and can know nothing but the contents of his own consciousness. Every object exists for him as a mental image contained within himself as an individual consciousness. He therefore contains within himself his so-called fleshly body, with its eyes and its ears and its additional organs of sense. These organs do *not* constitute his sight and his hearing, but, on the contrary, *the spiritual ideas of sight and hearing are*

reflected or made manifest upon his body in these organs. They are effects, never causes. Yet because he ignorantly attributes causation to them, he suffers the loss, in belief, of sight or hearing when these appear to him to be deranged or destroyed. Man sees, hears, smells, tastes, and feels in thought only. He sees, hears, smells, tastes, and feels *only his thoughts.* He acquires his knowledge, not *because* of the physical senses, but *in spite of them.* Yet, in his vast ignorance of Truth, does he believe that he gains a knowledge of a real universe of matter outside and about himself through the medium of the frail fleshly organs of sense. And this destructive ignorance the Roake plan proposes, with the support of the ministers and their material interpretation of the Bible, to perpetuate!

"Your Honor, this consciousness, called man, is also called *mind.* Because it is formed of material thought, it is a material mind. Matter is its subjective condition. This mind is an inconstant thing, for natural scientists are now declaring that not a single material property of matter, once considered eternal, can be said to be really constant. These investigators now admit that matter can no longer be regarded indestructible, no longer impenetrable. Weight, form, and color are entirely relative. Sensible things—that is, things perceived by the five physical senses—are now known to be only qualities, and *not the things themselves.* There is no heat in fire. It is a mental quality in the mind perceiving it. All sensible qualities are affairs of the perceiving mind, as has long since been pointed out. A chair, a house, a human body, is but a mental image or picture to which the mind gives the quality of permanence and place, and yet which is constantly disintegrating and passing. In every case, the thing immediately perceived is the *thought.* Mind cannot perceive matter as such. Men of so-called science no longer stubbornly regard matter as substance. They know that it can be broken up into electrical charges, resolved into that elastic medium called ether, that it can actually be refined into immateriality, into force, energy, vibration, and brought so close to the borderland of mind that no effort is now required to thrust it over into its true habitat, the realm of thought. When man believes he sees, feels, hears, smells, or touches matter, he is not concerned with real substance, *but with human thought.*

"Thus has the sincere investigator pursued elusive matter from the molecule down through the atom, through the electron, through energy and motion, through properties and qualities or modes of motion of the suppositional ether, until, stripped of every material quality, matter becomes an inference, a thing of speculative thought, a supposition, without inherent reality.

"The human mind thinks it looks out upon Nature, yet it sees but itself reflected. It witnesses the results of its own unprincipled mental processes and sets about laying down laws that will meet the average of chances. It regains from Nature only that which it has put into it. It is its own law unto itself. It sees nothing round about it, but only its own images of thought postulated in a mental concept which it has been pleased to call *space* and revealed in another concept which it calls *time*. The beauty of a sunset is within ourselves. The pain from a bruised finger is not *in* the finger, scientists will tell you, but several feet from the finger, in the brain. Yet it is not in the brain, for matter is not intelligent nor sensitive. The pain is in the human mind. And where, I ask, is that? The pain is itself a human belief, based on the premise that there are life, substance, sensation, and other qualities in matter.

"These concepts are now being rapidly destroyed. And every material quality and law is under sentence of condemnation. For this mind, called material man, is being revealed as the negation of Truth, and void of that which it denies.

"True progress, as Hegel put it, consists in the removal of the illusions which the human mind has created. Its great illusion is its belief in the reality of matter. This illusion demands that the Creator of all that is real shall have created that which is discordant, diseased—shall have instituted suffering, calamity, accident, poverty, death. True substance must contain only the elements of harmony. Yet all evil, all sickness, temptation, sin, sorrow, and death *can be directly traced to the belief that matter is substance and real—nay, that into it has been breathed the breath of life, and that in it intelligence dwells!* Matter is carnal thought's mental and aggressive suggestion of that which Mind is not. It is evil's concoction. It is mesmerism. Accepted as real, and believed to be testified of by the physical senses, it leads to all the misery and suffering which has ever appeared to befall mankind. On this basis, matter and evil are synonymous. Both are carnal thought, denying the allness of God as Good, denying the *metaphysical* basis of life. And on the basis of its materiality the Roake plan stands condemned!"

He paused. In the interval the clergyman who had called forth Doctor Rowley's address again sprang to his feet. "Your Honor," he cried, "we protest the arraignment of us ministers of the Gospel as associated with a movement essentially evil, especially when that arraignment is based on metaphysical subtleties which, since the beginning of time, have not been proved workable!"

"Your Honor," Doctor Rowley countered, "the human mind

to-day is being awakened to the astonishing fact that the evidence of an outer world of matter which it believes it derives from the physical senses is not fixed, is not constant, but can be changed in response to a permanently changed thought regarding it, and often changed very rapidly. The metaphysical law appears to be, first, a permanently altered thought, and, second, a changed material object. I contend that if this holds true in a single instance, it will hold true for the entire objective world. I contend that Jesus of Nazareth recognized this metaphysical law and made it work in the performance of his so-called miracles. I contend that his system of salvation is founded upon it. And in support of these contentions, I ask that you summon before us one who, in this day of rampant materialism, has made metaphysics work, Marian Whittier!"

CHAPTER 25

DOCTOR ROWLEY'S demand produced an immediate stir. For Marian Whittier's name and story were not unknown to these delegates. They had heard Doctor Roake mention her, and frequently, as being in some manner associated with the marked change which had come over Alden Cragg and which had resulted in his amazing willingness to meet death as a test of the life-views which he had undoubtedly obtained from her. A Crestelridge physician, who had been active in soliciting political preferment under the Roake plan, rose and called to the judge in protest. "Our suspicion of trickery has been increased!" he vehemently declared. "It can be shown that this girl has been in the past a disturber of society! We believed that she had gone to the war, but it now appears that she has been in hiding here to foster this scheme of interference with . . ."

Other protests arose. "Who is she?" was demanded. And "On what authority could *she* speak?" "Why should we listen to *her?*"

"You should listen to her," the rector cried, getting to his feet, "that you may be spared the long years of hell which I endured for refusing to hear her!"

"Summon Miss Marian Whittier!" commanded the judge, pounding with his gavel for order.

"Your Honor,"—David Barach was again speaking—"while we await the appearance of Miss Whittier I desire to bring to your attention certain other ideas on which the Roake plan rests, and which I declare to be inimical to the welfare of the people.

"I contend that medical science, so-called, even where honestly employed, fails to meet the woes of humanity. Understand me, I honor the honest doctor, and would in no way interfere with his conscientious efforts to alleviate suffering. It is only when the people are menaced by a scheme such as the Roake plan, and by it forced, through legislation, to submit to medical treatment, whether they wish it or not, and forced likewise to endure all the other iniquities of the pernicious scheme, that I rise in vigorous protest.

"The religio-medical aspect of the Roake plan is not new. It is a reversal of the subordination of medicine to religion, as was effected in ancient India and Egypt, where the priests became the physicians. Prior to that period the practitioners of the medical profession—which had its origin in idolatrous ages—were pagan priests, who invoked the aid of the gods in their healing work. Apollo was designated as 'the god of medicine'. Strangely enough he was also regarded as the god of pestilence, the sender of disease! Healing was exclusively confined to the temples, where the elaborate ceremonies employed to propitiate the gods acted vividly upon the imaginations of the sick and stimulated changes of thought which resulted in cures. In the fifth century B. C., Hippocrates protested against the use of magic and charms and set forth the theory of the *vis medicatrix naturae,* an invisible restorative essence or principle. He also involved the Pythagorean theory of numbers in his work and laid down the law of 'critical days', days when, in the progress of disease, crises might be expected. These days he fixed by numerical rules, sometimes on even numbers, sometimes on odd. Thus from the whim of a Greek philosopher is derived the present mortal mind law of crises in disease.

"Your Honor, from the day of Hippocrates down to the present, *materia medica* has considered man as a physical being only, and has treated the human organism only from that basis. The Roake plan consistently reverses the law of cause and effect and demands that it be permitted to enforce treatment *of the effect only,* totally ignoring the mental cause! Yet man *is* mental. And true Man is the reflection of the Mind that is God.

"I need not expose the grossly unscientific character of the medical practice of to-day. Yet I would be tolerant of this, as of all ignorance, but for the efforts of aggressive medical politicians to force this unscientific practice upon mankind. The politicians of the medical fraternity demand laws forbidding the practice of new methods of healing. But in the year 1842 the medical fraternity, inspecting the first bathtub constructed, pronounced it dangerous to health, and predicted numerous

zymotic diseases to result from its use! Three years later the city of Boston made bathing unlawful unless done on medical advice. Last winter here in Crestelridge coal could not be purchased except on a doctor's permit. And but a few months ago you went about with gauze bags on your noses to keep out the germ of Spanish influenza, a disease that is demonstrably *not* caused by germs. How far, on such a record, can even the honest medical practitioner be trusted? How much less, then, the medical politician!

"The Roake plan rests flatly upon the so-called 'germ theory'. Notwithstanding that it has been demonstrated again and again that germs may be a product of disease, but that they are decidedly *not* its cause, the medical politicians stand squarely on their statement that the germ theory is as firmly established as the law of gravity. So it is, for the law of gravity was broken by Jesus of Nazareth nineteen centuries before Newton announced his discovery of it! Again to-day, in the Einstein theory, the law of gravitation has received another blow. Our navy physicians have themselves proved that Spanish influenza was not propagated by a germ. One hundred sailors voluntarily submitted to inoculations of so-called influenza germs into their bodies, they ate the germs, they drank them, they inhaled them—and not one developed the disease, nor even a symptom of it! Not one developed even a cold, or a fever! A Toronto physician conducted more than a hundred experiments with various sorts of so-called disease germs, among them nineteen with germs of pneumonia, in the attempt to produce the various diseases in human beings. In no case was he successful! On the records of such experiments, and on thousands of other instances, I contend that there never was life or power in bacteria or other morbid conception. Bacteria never caused disease. Nor did any serum ever render a human being immune from any disease! Nor did it ever heal one. I contend that it is utterly impossible to define the morphological or physiological characteristics of any species of bacteria.

"In ancient times the people wore amulets to protect them from disease. To-day they wear vaccination scars. Does one afford more protection than the other? Is the latter more scientific than the former? Whence came the wonderful discovery of vaccination? From the old legend that one who had had the cowpox would never catch the smallpox. From that a certain Jenner, who had purchased his medical diploma for fifteen pounds sterling, and who had been curing hydrophobia by ducking the victims three times in running water, tried the experiment of inoculating a person with cowpox and then with smallpox, and perceiving that the person did not develop the

latter disease, proceeded to announce the 'discovery' of a specific against the dread malady of smallpox. The human mind caught it up eagerly, and a belief became to it a law, just as efficacious as the ancient amulet. Yet in a recent report our War Department admitted that, despite frequent vaccination, our soldiers developed numerous cases of smallpox, with many deaths. And the frightful results that have followed vaccination itself are on records open to all who are unprejudiced enough to read. But vaccination persists under law secured by the medical politician. Ah, but universal compulsory vaccination in this country would mean an additional income to the doctors *of a hundred million dollars!* Primitive man drank the blood of his brave enemy to imbibe his courage. To-day we inoculate with foul diseases in order to strengthen ourselves against disease. Have we progressed beyond the savage? God above! that the pus of a diseased animal should be employed in this twentieth century to cure mankind! So far have a people departed from their God!

"Your Honor, the Roake plan is at present self-supporting. As to how it secured its funds, I shall speak later. Let me say that in future it will demand from state and nation vast sums of money. Now were the medical profession successful in coping with disease, I would raise no protest. But let me state that of the fifty million people who die annually, one-half die prematurely because *materia medica* fails to cure them! From thirty to seventy per cent of the medical diagnoses are incorrect: yet the people of these United States pay to their doctors in fees nearly $200,000,000 a year! The wholesale and retail druggists do an annual business of more than that same amount! There are $900,000,000 invested in patent medicines in the United States! There are more than 200,000 doctors in this country. Yet nearly two million of our people die each year. To maintain our medical profession we must spend at least $800,000,000 annually. Our funerals cost us not less than $150,000,000 a year! Because of *materia medica's* failure, more than thirty-five million people in these United States are depending now on some form of drugless healing. But the medical politician is pursuing them hard! It is said that 'the average mortality from disease in this country would not be over seven per cent without any medical treatment'. Yet the people are under constant subjection to the medical politician's persistent drive to bring the health regulation under the power of a tyrannical régime and fasten upon the public an expensive and humiliating system of espionage! The tonsil-hunter is abroad, pursuing our little ones; the indigent graduate must compete with the medical politician who is searching his

Bradstreet for ratings upon which to base the advisability of surgical operations! Is it not time, I ask you, that our legislators looked with favor upon some other method of dealing with disease? Is it not time that our clergymen began to ponder the Master's admonition to heal the sick, instead of bitterly fighting those who are pondering it and who are endeavoring to learn and employ his truly scientific method?

"Your Honor . . ." He paused, for the messenger who had been sent to summon Marian Whittier had returned and was reporting in a whisper to the judge. A strange look came into the latter's face as he listened. Then he raised his head and nodded to Barach. "Proceed," he said. And, while Barach still stood hesitant, the judge crossed to the rector and bent over him. "Marian is at 'Craggmont' with Doctor Roake!" he said quickly. "He sent for her a few minutes ago!"

* * * * * * * *

Toward morning Doctor Roake emerged from his delirium, weak, but with mentality clear. The frightful dreams in which, hour after hour, he had fought to the death with a ghastly specter that resembled Ted Sayor had been dispelled. But they had left him with a great fear. And over that fear, its causes and its potentialities, he now set himself to ponder, despite his physicians' entreaties to yield himself to the sleep which they would induce.

With his knowledge of mental processes he could clearly ascribe his uneasiness of the past few days, his unwonted nervousness and his undefined but growing apprehension, to the presence of mental forces opposing his own. But whence did they emanate, if not from Alden Cragg and the Galuth? Yet certainly these two had been incapable of carrying into effect the diabolical trick of the preceding night, even had they devised such a thing in thought! Nor had chance effected it; for the doctor's knowledge of mental law always eliminated the merely fortuitous from his calculations. Who was it who had known Ted Sayor's fate? Who had traced the body and so cunningly placed it before him in—of all places!—that clinic? And how, in God's name, could they have carried out such a daring plan without detection? It indicated coöperation, and of persons in authority and power! And what did it portend to him? Was it an end in itself, or but a boding beginning? The latter, he was certain. And he was convinced that its aim was single—death! Death to his schemes and to himself!

And well he knew that he could not live with a diminished prestige. To be toppled from the lofty pinnacle upon which he had so painstakingly clambered through long, patient years meant to him extinction. . .

Dwelling upon the baleful prospect, his thought ever darkened. Yet his fear bred not despair, but the animal daring of desperation. The conflict was become a test of his own developed powers, pitted against forces invisible. Could he face his enemies in the open, he were confident of success. But if he must strike in the dark, then woe to them upon whom his undiscriminating blows should fall! The success of which he had dreamed for years was within his grasp; death should not snatch it from him! . . .

Although Mrs. Whittier and the rector had been summoned by Ethel when Doctor Roake had been brought home the preceding night, the attending physicians had refused them permission to see him. Mrs. Whittier remained with her daughter through the night, while the rector returned home to prepare for his dramatic part in the convention which would assemble the following day.

"He will come through all right, Ethel darling," Mrs. Whittier comforted, "and then he will turn on his sneaking enemies and put them to rout! But, my country!" she repeatedly exclaimed under her breath, "how came Ted Sayor . . . *there?*"

At nine o'clock Doctor Roake, apparently greatly recovered, was apprised of the convening of the delegates in compliance with his request, and he experienced a great sense of relief. He was still in command! It was a tonic! And he summoned his valet and, to the dismay of the physicians, insisted on rising and dressing. Supported by his anxious doctors, his secretary, and the valet, and flanked by the sedulous Mrs. Whittier, he went into his study, where a carefully prescribed breakfast was served him. Then, of a sudden, he dismissed them all and locked his door against them.

For a mental suggestion had come to him, at first seemingly ridiculous, though insistent, and now positively obsessing: *Marian Whittier had returned!*

How did he know? But no one can explain *how* he knows a thing: thoughts present themselves. And this thought had presented to Doctor Roake, as it were a lightning flash from a cloudless sky.

But if she had returned—and now he *knew* that she had! —was it not in response to his mental demand that she should? Fear fled, and he sat for a moment spellbound by the sense of his own triumph. Then he unlocked a drawer of his desk and took therefrom the red-sealed document which he had so fortunately—yet not fortuitously, ah, no!—prevented from falling into the hands of the rector. His eyes closely scanned for the thousandth time the title: *Concerning the family of the Reverend Wilson Whittier, Crestelridge, N. Y., U. S. A.*

As he studied it he smiled. Had he not won every point thus far? And won through his constantly demonstrated knowledge of the laws of the human mind? Did he not, years gone, discover that mortals leave their decisions to the physical senses and are thereby led to believe evil more powerful than good? Did not even the preachers do this? Was it not on this discovery that he had set out to master a world? And, as time passed and proofs multiplied, he had gradually come to believe it himself. "Mind rules," was his deduction. "And human thought has simply reversed itself, for that which mortals call evil is demonstrably more powerful than that which they call good." Material science? He scoffed at the puerile knowledge! Drugs? Poof! Power was in mind, through suggestion! And he had mastered it, mastered the secret and its application! *He had brought Marian Whittier back!*

He rose and walked about. He was *not* ill! The human mind's will to be well was omnipotent against disease. He had *not* been overthrown by that scurvy trick of last night! He could turn even that to his own advantage by the report that the sight of an old friend in such horrible circumstances had unnerved him. Marian Whittier was in Crestelridge! She was at, not the rectory, but the Galuth's! He *knew* it! And he knew more: having brought her across the seas, *he could bring her to himself!*

"But there are some who consider Marian Whittier dangerous." It was the senator who had voiced this on that wild March night three years before. And the doctor had confidently returned: "Yes . . . unless herself controlled."

With every instant his strength returned and his mind functioned like a mighty motor. He paced the floor with an elastic spring, with nerve and muscle quivering for action. He laughed aloud. It was his supreme hour! *Marian Whittier was controlled!*

His secretary knocked insistently upon the door. There was bad news from the convention. The doctor sprang to the clattering telephone. Came then the wild reports of the seizure of the convention by the avowed enemies of the Roake plan—of David Barach's return and his damning charges—of the rector's treacherous defection—of Judge Calwin's incredible conduct—

The doctor stood stunned. His victory was being reversed! The ground was being cut away from beneath him! He must go before the convention at once! But if Marian should be there already! . . . He frantically clutched the telephone and, scarce aware of his conduct, called the Galuth home. A response came immediately. He stifled a cry of relief, of exultation, of triumph, for he recognized the voice of Marian Whittier! . . .

From the telephone he sprang to the speaking-tube and gave his chauffeur a brief command. Then he tore open the study door and bade his waiting secretary bring Senator Chaddock. Alone with the latter a few moments later, he brought the last reserve of his mental forces to bear. "Death!" he suggested to the wretched creature who came at once under his absolute control. "Death, you *beast!* You *gorilla,* death! *Death!*" And the docile subject, no longer human, responded to his master's every command. . .

CHAPTER 26

MARIAN had sent her warriors into the arena with a preparation quite unique. The duties which she had assigned to each had been proportionate to the training. David Barach's preparation had been extraordinary and of long duration. His, therefore, was the major task. Doctor Rowley had been partially prepared by his association with Alden in Florida during Ethel's desperate illness, and since Marian's return had been under her constant tutelage. His task was second in importance. To the rector, whose preparation had been less, except that imparted by his long suffering, she had assigned a work of momentous proportions, though of far shorter duration. And Alden, whose awesome experience in Palestine had lifted him spiritually far higher than these, she held for further consultation and for that mental work which was a task vastly greater than any to be performed by them.

And then she sent him, in Madam Galuth's car, knowing that he went clad in the armor of right thinking.

"We are not anxious," she said to Madam Galuth, as they sat waiting. "The battle is not ours, but God's. We shall stand aside and see Him victorious."

"God has wonderfully used you, Marian," the woman answered.

"But of them to whom much is given much is required," the girl replied. "I can of myself do nothing. Oh, if people would only realize that, and see themselves merely as channels! Good or evil, right thought or the wrong, is constantly using us, and through us using others for weal or for woe!"

"Through you God is sweeping away the refuge of lies. I am sure that it was through your work that the one seemingly insuperable obstacle was removed."

"Doctor Roake? And yet God will not abandon him. For it is he who most needs help. Oh, he must see how error has used him! He must be made free! Perhaps I . . ."

Madam Galuth shook her head doubtfully. "I think such as he will not be convinced except by passing through the experience of death."

Marian flew to answer the telephone's call, for Alden had said that he would, if possible, report to her on the probability of her being summoned to the convention. But the voice that now issued from the instrument was not Alden's. And it greatly startled her, so that her hand shook and the receiver almost fell. It was a familiar voice, low, rich, but now inexpressibly sad. It was the voice of hopeless, despairing resignation. It was the voice of the lost. Yet it bore no note of condemnation, none of reproach. It was a rending appeal from a stricken soul forever abandoned by its God. . .

Marian turned to the equally startled woman at her side. "Doctor Roake is calling for me!" she cried. "He has asked me to come to him!"

"Marian! . . . How did he learn that you were here?"

"I don't know! It may have been told in the convention! He said he knew that Alden had been saved in Palestine . . . through me! He has sent his car! Oh, I cannot refuse his call! It may be God's way of reaching him!" And she hurried to don her cloak and hat.

"But I cannot let you go! It is a trap!"

"God is my protection!"

"It is error's way of doing you harm through him!"

"Are you giving error power?"

"No; but neither would I defy it! Error has been stirred to its depths by your work; it will dare anything now, for it has been driven to the brink!"

"Error's awful daring destroys it! Evil is always a suicide! But I cannot believe that Doctor Roake is deceiving me! He was crushed by his awful experience of last night! Whenever I have thought of him since then I have felt so sad! Oh, I am so sorry for him! I want so to help him! He needs help now; he knows it, and he is calling for me! I must go to him! I must!"

Even as she spoke the doctor's magnificent limousine drove up and the liveried chauffeur sprang to the door. The girl threw her arms about the woman's neck, kissed her, and was gone.

* * * * * * * *

Immediately following his purchase of "Craggmont" Doctor Roake had inaugurated certain changes in the property to suit his whims. To the south, and at a distance of some fifty yards from the house, he constructed a laboratory, and equipped it to the minutest detail for any kind of research work. A court

was laid out between the residence and the new laboratory, in which a botanical garden was to be established in the spring, and numerous ponds for the culture of the various sorts of aquatic creatures that the doctor might wish to investigate. Upon this court and the laboratory and the great gardens beyond, the south windows of the doctor's suite gave, affording a charming vista. The laboratory, now just completed, was one story in height, of beautiful Tudor design in keeping with the residence, and luxuriously appointed within. It was entered from the street on the southwest side, and there was also a covered passageway from the residence, forming part of the wonderful stone wall on that side, which served the doctor during inclement weather. The entrance from the street opened immediately into an exquisite marble corridor which ran the length of the building. At the end of this corridor nearest the residence was the doctor's private office, into which the passageway directly led. To this laboratory the doctor intended now to summon his various "subjects" for study, psychological, physiological, anatomical, pathological. There he expected to hold his most important consultations. There he would do his deepest thinking. A maid was to be in attendance in the beautiful waiting room, and experts and specialists in many lines, together with chemists, mechanics, students, were to be constantly employed in the various departments.

From the moment in which the suggestion had come to him that Marian Whittier was in Crestelridge the doctor's thought had flashed with electrical swiftness. From the moment that the reports had come concerning the seizure of the convention his mental processes had been dominated by a single desire. It was an obsession, diabolical, deadly. It was the devilish suggestion that the wrecking of the convention was due to Marian Whittier; that it was in some manner the result of her work in Palestine, in Persia, and elsewhere; that it had been made possible by her association with persons of authority whom she had gathered about her, probably whom she had met and influenced—as he knew only she could influence—while in foreign lands; that she and these had learned or conjectured things which had given them the courage to undertake the audacious emprise on which they were now embarked. But he knew that the soul and animating spirit of it all was Marian herself, and that his own salvation and that of the convention could be effected in but *one* way. And it must be done quickly!

It was not a suggestion that could shock him. Suggestions of a like base nature had come throughout the years, and he had permitted them to use him too often to be at all affected

now by this. It was merely the immediate necessity and manner of acting upon it that caused him concern.

Swiftly the hellish suggestions chased one another. The doctor had never raised his own hand against an enemy: his work was always done through others as channels. He suggested; they did the work—and were themselves destroyed in the doing. His thought had turned to Senator Chaddock, now devoid of a mentality of his own and always an ever-ready receptacle for the mind of the doctor. The laboratory was empty of human occupant this day, owing to the convention. It was all possible. It was childishly simple—if the girl could be induced to come.

And then—Oh, ye omnipotent gods of mortal mind!—she was there! she was *coming!*

He hurried into the apartments where the physicians and his anxious family awaited. They gasped when they saw him. His step was firm. His face was strangely eager. His manner unwontedly animated. "The will to be well!" murmured the physicians. "The will to do! He has mastered it! He is wonderful! He will win against his enemies!"

In a word he bade the doctors behold him recovered. He bade them hurry to secure legal support and fly to the aid of the convention, to rally his cohorts and bid them know that he, their invincible leader, was coming. He gave instructions and employment to his secretary. He bade Mrs. Whittier—herself amazed, astonished, overwhelmed with admiration of his marvelous powers—get the almost hysterical Ethel to bed and attend upon her until he should return. He would prepare for the battle in the convention—and prepare alone. In his magnetic presence, at his dynamic words, they flew to their various assignments. And he left with a final command that the servants be instructed to prepare a dinner in the great banquet hall that night.

It was daring! He knew it was daring, the most terribly daring attempt of his long and increasingly daring career! But there was no recourse! It *had* to be done, or he was lost! And its very daring stimulated him! Because of it he lost sight of the danger and waxed increasingly enthusiastic!

And—ah, that was its justification!—*it had a scientific aspect!* For why had Alden Cragg been so willing to meet death? Was it not because he had learned of that girl that death need not be feared, that it might be overcome? Had not Cragg publicly stated that he had come back from the dead? And he knew, did the wise doctor, that Alden's knowledge of things metaphysical had been imparted to him by her!

Then she should meet the test that had, at the last moment,

been denied Alden! The doctor's disappointment in *that* respect should be retrieved! And it was in the interest of science! He would learn her secret that she had employed in Alden's behalf in Palestine! He would use it for his own ends! He would be the world's greatest scientist! The world's greatest power!

If she failed to meet the test, it was no murder, for again, it was in the interest of science! If she lived through it . . . if she lived . . .

From his windows he saw his car round the corner of the laboratory. She was there! Sin's awful daring had culminated! He seized the waiting imbecile who sat mumbling in a corner and dragged him to the elevator. Fear, eagerness, enthusiasm, madness, all lent wings to his feet. He reached his room in the laboratory just as the chauffeur opened the street door and pointed Marian down the long corridor.

* * * * * * * *

When Judge Calwin bent over the rector and whispered that Marian had gone to "Craggmont" the latter sprang from his chair with a gasp. But the judge restrained him. David Barach had stood for a moment hesitant, then had hurried over just in time to catch the judge's words.

"Don't stop, in heaven's name!" the judge turned and frantically whispered to Barach. "Go back and continue talking, or we are lost!"

"I'm going to 'Craggmont'!" Barach returned excitedly.

"You can't!" catching him by the arm. "Don't you see that we are in a trap? If we lose control of the convention now, all is over with us! Go back, man, go back!"

The rector sank down in his chair with a groan. Already the delegates were rising. There was muttering and talking. Barach saw it and sprang out before them. He seemed suddenly to have burst into flame. "Down!" he shouted. "Back to your seats, you poor, misguided rabble! Stay till you hear what this thing is that has used you through your hell-guided leader! Some day you will learn of the liberated mortal mind! Then you will know that Jeremiah Roake *is* such a mind, liberated from the hampering beliefs of old theology, liberated from the restrictions of belief of power in drugs, but, uninstructed by Truth, become the tool of his own belief in the power of evil! A mental diabolist is he! A mental manipulator! A mental assassin, who, seeking to dominate mankind, has trampled upon the divine Principle! Back into your seats, I say!" his eyes shooting fire as he flashed them at some who were reluctant to obey. "Back till I tell you what this liberated mortal mind has already done and what it is doing through and to *you!*

Long years ago did Jeremiah Roake become interested in mental phenomena, and devote himself to psychology, not knowing that, far from being the science of Soul, it was but the materialistic study of the mortal mind that is opposed to God! This led him into the development of the mortal mind's powers of hypnosis; and to further it he went to Egypt and to India and Germany, the land of Mesmer! He concluded that mind was omnipotent! He learned that he could control others! Then came the temptation to master the world. He believed he could do it through the fears and credulity of the people, for the average mentality of the people is that of a child! Mental suggestion would accomplish it! He did not discriminate between good and evil: those were but relative terms! Yet, because of the constitution of the human mind, he believed that suggestions of what the world calls evil were more potent in their effects upon mankind, because of ready human acceptance of them, than suggestions of good! You fear evil; the world does; and because of that very fear are you most receptive to it! His plan of world-mastery was not like the German Kaiser's: Jeremiah Roake did not make the mistake of resorting to material force! He could most easily effect it through the fetishes of medicine and religion! He studied to become a doctor! He picked his theologian! He chose Crestelridge because, adjacent to New York City, it was a secluded center in the world's heart! Great fortunes were awaiting him here! To secure them he had to kill a human mentality! He did it, and *Senator Chaddock is an imbecile to-day as the result!*"

At this there was an uproar from the people. They rose and began to move. Judge Calwin pounded with his gavel and shouted to them to be seated. Doctor Proast ran to the front of the stage and held up his hands. "In God's name, friends, let us hear this man!" he loudly cried.

"Back!" shouted Barach. "Back, I tell you! For the same evil suggestions that have used him would now close your ears to the truth! Hear me through," as they began to quiet down again. "Then take what course you choose! Doctor Harris Chaddock was restrained by political patronage! When his work was done he was removed! And the instrument that removed him was likewise destroyed! Roake used Harris Chaddock to suggest the devil's errand to me! That Alden Cragg might be removed from the pathway of Jeremiah Roake to the Cragg fortune, I was sent to the battlefields of Europe to kill him! And, not knowing what was using me, I obeyed! But—God's name!—the lad was saved, and saved by the only obstacle that remained in Roake's path, Marian Whittier! I shot the boy at Roake's bidding, but the Christ raised him at this girl's! . . ."

"The Christ?" cried an excited preacher. "That man is a *Jew!*"

"God above! He shot young Cragg?" gasped another.

"He's mad!"

"Wait, gentlemen, wait!" It was Doctor Proast again counseling them.

"Is it not enough?" cried Barach. "Then go back and ask why, years ago, Senator Chaddock's wife was permitted to die, though Doctor Roake was in attendance. Roake needed just such a man as the senator—and he *got* him! Roake let my own wife die! I was then available for any use that he might have for me! Roake sent Alden Cragg to war to be killed, then killed the boy's mother—Roake? No, I tell you again, it was aggressive mental suggestion, using Roake and driving him upon his own lusts for power and place, that committed these foul crimes! Roake, through Senator Chaddock, filched the Cragg and Sayor estates! He slew Ted Sayor, and deliberately, because the boy's keen satires on *materia medica* were dangerous to the Roake plan! Will you have more? Will you know why he has been active in endeavoring to bring about the dismemberment of the British Empire? To set Great Britain and America at each other's throats? Will you know how he has attempted to secure the wealth of the richest man in England? This evil mind, this assassin, this mental manipulator, acting aggressively through Doctor Jeremiah Roake, is *your* leader! The Roake plan is the concoction of this murderous liberated mortal mind! It has hypnotized you! Dominated you! And it will ruin you and your cause! Its pathway is strewn with the dead! And at this moment, even while I speak, it has lured its sole remaining obstacle into its clutches and is attempting its destruction! Marian Whittier . . ."

"She's the rector's daughter! And he played us false!" shouted someone.

The rector rose, white and shaking, and tottered forward. "In God's name, gentlemen," he cried, "let me confess that she is *not* my daughter! She is the daughter of Max Penberry, only son of Simeon Penberry, of London!"

David Barach turned and stared open-mouthed at the rector. The house fell quiet. Then all turned and looked in the direction of the door. For a tall, white-haired man was forcing his way in, followed by police officers.

"*Damme!*" he shouted, elbowing his opposers aside. "What's that about Simeon Penberry? What's that you're saying about that girl? What's that? What's that?"

The officers with him forced the way and hurried to the stage. Doctor Proast and Judge Calwin came forward to receive

them. "We are agents of the British Government," announced their leader. "We have papers for the arrest and requisition of Jeremiah Roake. He is a British subject, an Irishman, charged with treasonable offenses."

The house again burst into an uproar. Above the din the judge scarce made himself heard. The people scrambled over seats and upon the stage and surrounded the newcomers. The tall, white-haired man had stalked to the rector and was bending over him, clutching him by the shoulders. "Damme!" he shouted. "What's that you were saying? Br-r-r-r!"

"Gentlemen!" cried Doctor Proast. "Let us adjourn! Let us adjourn!"

"Go," called the judge, "and send your Executive Committee to me!" The dénouement had been far greater than he had anticipated, and he was exhausted.

Barach had not waited, but had dashed from the hall and into the street. There he had requisitioned a cab and bidden its driver speed to "Craggmont".

The rector, gasping and choking, struggled against his glowering oppressor. "Simeon Penberry!" he cried. *"You!* . . . But we must go to 'Craggmont'! . . . Marian is there . . . with *him!* . . . Oh, where is Alden . . . Alden Cragg?"

"He was at the door," someone replied excitedly, "when Barach reported that the girl had gone to Doctor Roake's! Then he ran out and jumped into his car and drove away!"

CHAPTER 27

WHEN the chauffeur opened the door of the car Marian sat hesitant. "But this . . . this is not . . . 'Craggmont'!" she exclaimed.

"It is Doctor Roake's laboratory," the chauffeur answered. "I was ordered to bring you here."

"But," she spoke incredulously, "is he not in . . . in the house? He was reported . . . ill."

"I can't say, Miss. I haven't seen him. All I know is that he was dead sick last night, but better this morning. Then he talked with me through the speaking-tube and told me to fetch you here. It may be because the house is full of people, doctors and nurses and such."

For a moment it seemed to the girl impossible to move. Her thought became confused. The chauffeur stood regarding her curiously. Then, slowly, she descended from the car and mechanically followed him up the steps and into the building.

On the threshold she paused. Something seemed to strike her, something invisible, yet tangible. And it left a sense of weakness.

"The last one down that way," she heard the chauffeur say, as he pointed down the corridor. Then the door closed behind her, and she knew that she was alone.

Yet not alone, for she knew as she stood there, seemingly dazed, that *he* was awaiting her in that room at the end of the corridor.

With this thought a strange sensation came over her. It was as if in that room far down the corridor, as in the foul recesses of a hidden cave, a monster devil-fish lay concealed, waiting for her to come within the radius of its deadly arms. It was as if she stood in a reeking swamp, where, in the black shadows, lurked a giant anaconda, its glittering eyes fastened upon her, and the subtle mesmerism of its hideous, unseen presence drawing her nearer, ever nearer. . .

She shivered, and involuntarily drew her cloak closer. The corridor was cold. And how quiet it was! The dead silence smote her. The narrow corridor appeared to close in around her like a tomb. A feeling of sadness swept over her. Yet through it she seemed to remember that in his lonely tomb the Master solved the problem of being.

She threw off the depressing influence and started down the corridor. But with a few steps she again halted. Why was she there? And to what was she going? *This* was not her place! She turned. . .

But Man is the true idea of Mind. She knew that. And knew that because of it Man must be always in his right place. Yet consciousness of this saving fact comes only as the false belief in a material self apart from Mind is made to yield to the spiritual understanding that "I and the Father are one". The right place is not material locality, but opportunity to receive and reflect the incessant unfoldment of good.

She moved forward again. The long corridor seemed to stretch out before her interminably. Through it the claim of animal magnetism to control and govern by deadening the human mind came slinking. Out from the refuge of lies it crept to envelop her. Its baleful arguments of catastrophe came whispering low and mournfully. The long corridor symbolized man's pilgrimage, the haphazard, purposeless, uncertain, futile journey through the narrow vale of human experience to extinction. And as she moved slowly through it her sadness deepened.

A great pity rose within her. Deception had lured her there, as it lured mankind through life, only to mock human

hopes. She had come in the belief that she would be taken to the house, that she would find him there eagerly awaiting her in his great need, that he would be gladly receptive. . .

She had been cruelly betrayed. She knew he had learned of her return, that he knew of her part in the opposition against him. She knew now, even as well as she knew he did, that she must be removed from his path, that it was now her extinction or his. And through love betrayed she had been lured to that place, lured down that corridor to . . .

Yet she need not go on! The door was but a few steps back! Again she stopped.

As she stood, the words of Madam Galuth came to her: "We must be wise in responding to those who ask for aid."

She had lacked wisdom. She knew it now—too late. The admission which but for the mesmeric suspension of her normal mental operations had not found voice, raised high the gates of thought to a drowning flood of self-condemnation. She had not obeyed. The first sin was disobedience. And that brought death.

But she had been tricked. She had come on a mission of purest love, but human treachery had called her. And her sense of resentment was great. In its wake came utter sadness. Her spirits sank to fathomless depths. The light failed and darkness fell.

What mattered it now whether she returned or went on? It would always be the same. She had fought, she had stood, she had beaten back the enemy again and again; yet always it confronted her, dropping one guise for another, but always the same enemy, fresh, vigorous, aggressive, confident. The conflict was endless. . .

How dark it was! And the silence so horrible in its portent! Yet confusedly she remembered that David, in the loneliness, doubt, and darkness, sang even in the wilderness. What of height, or depth, or human sense of joy or woe? The infinite Principle was everywhere present and available. And knowing it, the shepherd boy had triumphed ere he cast the stone at the Philistine giant.

Her thought lifted measurably. She turned and went on. The way seemed easier, her burden lighter.

But through the darkness, the cold, and the silence came the insistent query: "To what are you going?"

To man? But true Man is not measured by material sense. Such measurement reveals naught but the Adam concept, the material sense of creation derived from the communal mortal mind, the suppositional opposite of the Mind divine. Man is not as he appears to the material senses to be; and Adam

is but error, in which all die who accept it as real. Because of this, because the Christ is generic Man, Isaiah could foretell the day when one "shall not judge after the sight of his eyes." If David were right, to what could she go but to Principle?

She moved forward, comforted, yet with a sense of something wrong. And dwelling on that sense, her thought seemed again to cloud. Questions, human, oppressive, appeared to crowd upon her. What was it that had come over her so suddenly, so swiftly, as she entered this building? What was it that she was battling with now? What awaited her in that room down the corridor?

Again the pendulum swung back. Her confidence died. Her heart grew chill. Yet she knew that the door was back there. She could still go.

But that were defeat. And yet she was already defeated, broken. And the incarnation of the jeering, mocking enemy awaited down there to complete his triumph. . .

And what, after all, had the enemy asked of her? Only that she acknowledge its claims—claims that were visible, tangible, just—claims that were so easily acknowledged by others who laughed and sang and were prosperous and glad. *Their* lives were not an endless struggle. *They* were not outcasts, shunned, despised, mocked. *They* had not foolishly exchanged the good things of life for the shadows.

"Power," she had told the major in Antonia's Tower, "is Truth." And he had exultingly answered: "But you are in *my* power, and I am human!" Yet she had broken from his grasp and met death!

Could she meet it now? She had met it for Alden. Yet he was admittedly but in the vestibule. Could she have met it had he lain in the tomb? Could she meet it for herself? Ah, the steps that the Master had patiently taken! The daughter of Jairus was but where Alden had been; the widow's son was being borne to the tomb; Lazarus had been four days dead. The raising of each was a step in progression as the Master's understanding grew. Then—but not until he *knew*—did he meet the enemy for himself. . .

Could she? For *she was going to death!*

A sense of hopelessness rolled over her like a smothering wave. The door was back there . . . but she knew she would not return to it. Knew she could not. For she was in the tomb. She was lost. She stopped, with the tears falling from her cheeks.

But she was impelled to move on, and she started forward. Oh, how tired she was, how dreadfully tired! If she could sleep and forget while the blow fell. But she must go on.

And, oh, how she pitied herself! She had been so deceived. She had lost that which she had not even possessed. But so had the world's great reformers all been deceived—and the world has always been wiser than they. So had the Nazarene been lured to the cross. "My power, my power, why hast thou forsaken me?" It was the epitaph of all who had resisted the enemy's claims. It would be hers. She was in mortal agony under her cross, but she *must* go on. She staggered ahead, stumbled, burst into sobs, and stood, drooping. "Oh, my *God!*"

The cry broke from her involuntarily. It crashed upon her senses like a burst of thunder, and went roaring down through the echoing corridor. Under it the spell shattered—and she awoke.

Awoke, with a start, with a cry, to sense the lethal flood of suggestions rolling over her; awoke to the damping, suffocating, deadening influence that was upon her; awoke to know that presence in that room beyond for what it was—not power, not presence, but the impotent tool of animal magnetism; awoke to detect the animus back of the mythical thing, to see its sham pretense, and to crush the black fear with which it would have paralyzed her. Instantly she knew, as she braced herself, that of herself she could do nothing, and that that very knowledge likewise rendered powerless the evil that had been so subtly directed against her. Instantly she knew God alone to be Cause, and that no power, no intelligence, no law, could exist opposed to Him. Instantly she looked through the claims of evil and knew that malpractice as a power *did not exist.*

"My God," she cried aloud, "we know Thee!"

For she knew now that to ask the name of the evil that had come over her, to demand what it was that she was battling with, had made real the mesmerism and brought her under its spell. She knew now that facing it as an enemy had insured her own defeat, for Man has no enemies. She knew now that instant obedience had been demanded of her when she found herself dismayed before the laboratory, but that the human sense of deception—though God be All—had kept her from yielding it. The surrender to suggestions of defeat, of self-pity, of weariness in pursuit of the right, had brought her to the pit. And she had been awakened on the brink to find the guardian angels there, the intuitions that guide away from matter and its illusions into Truth.

In speechless gratitude she stood and drew on again the armor which had been torn from her. Again she recognized in this crucial experience the ever-presence of the divine Love that would deliver her—though she might not outline the

manner—and cause her constructive thinking to bless all mankind. She rejoiced now that she was there; rejoiced that to her had been given the power through understanding to see things as they are; rejoiced that in an experience before which the world would cower she could find an occasion for joy. The Christ was with her, as the Christ had been promised to the world even to the end of every human belief that opposes the supremacy of God. It was Love that had guided her through the storms of human dilemma; that had cast out the obtruding concepts of frightened human sense; that had rendered simple the solution of tangled human problems. It was Love that had caused her to see the impersonal nature of evil and to echo the Master's: "Father, forgive them, for they know not . . ." It was Love that had taught her that God could not know evil, and that naught can exist that He cannot know. It was Love that had delivered her from human hatred by teaching her to reflect Love. It was Love that had shown her what Man is as the true expression of Mind. It was Love that had rendered relapse impossible by dispelling the illusion and revealing no evil condition to which to return. It was Love that had shown her the cruel mistake of belief in a supposed dual nature of the human and the divine, of Spirit and its opposite, error. It was Love that had antidoted her sense of suffering and cast out fear through the understanding of God as All. It was Love that had taught her to obey the divine command to heal the sick, though the world cast itself in her way to oppose. It was Love that had started her in the way the Master had trod, who overcame matter in his "ascension" and acquired that consciousness of perfect harmony which is the sitting at the right hand of God. It was Love that had exposed the nothingness of the human knowledge that sees power in the forces of matter, the phenomena of the carnal mind. It was Love that had shown her the emptiness of the concept of death and had liberated Alden Cragg. It was Love that had given her the courage now to say to the mortal terrors that howled around her: "It is finished! Peace, be still!" It was Love that was leading her down that corridor.

With a pæan of praise in her soul, with naught but boundless love for the man who had brought her there, she hurried on and turned in at the open door.

As she did so Alden Cragg came rushing into the room from the passageway that connected the laboratory with the house. Close behind him followed the doctor's secretary, his valet, and physicians who had just arrived from the convention. Alden sprang to the girl and turned her back into the corridor.

"Marian! Come away!"

"Alden! You . . . here! But I must go to him! He needs me!"

"No! He got you here through deceit! Do not go to him!" But, as the girl persisted: "Then, if you insist, I shall go with you!"

He turned back with her. But before they reached the door of the doctor's room the secretary emerged. His face was pale and his limbs shook. "Take her out that way!" he gasped, pointing up the corridor to the street entrance.

For Jeremiah Roake sat at his desk in that room—dead.

CHAPTER 28

FROM the Glass theater the delegates poured in confusion when the judge, at Doctor Proast's request, had bidden them go. The members of the Executive Committee gathered in a dazed group and were conducted by Doctor Lann to his office, to be joined by Judge Calwin for a further conference. The British agents, on learning that Doctor Roake was not there, started at once for "Craggmont", accompanied by federal officers and local police. Simeon Penberry dragged the rector down to a car, and bade the amazed chauffeur forget traffic regulations on the way to "Craggmont".

Arrived at the mansion, they were met by Mrs. Whittier—herself supported by a corps of frightened servants—who had just been apprised of the distressing occurrences in the convention and of the arrival of Simeon Penberry. "Father!" she cried in an effusive enactment of her hastily studied rôle, "welcome, welcome! But why didn't you cable that you were coming?" And she rushed to embrace him.

But he held her off. "Damme! when you're bringing government agents to capture the blackest rogue on earth you don't advertise it, do you?" he shouted. "Where's Roake? Where's Marian? Here, you officers," to the police, "turn over the whole bally place!"

"Mr. Cragg and the doctor's secretary are searching for him, sir!" ventured a frightened butler.

"Damme!" cried Penberry, wheeling again upon Mrs. Whittier, "but you played me a jolly trick! But I've cards up my sleeve that will trump it!"

David Barach appeared just then, followed by the doctor's secretary. "We have found him," he said quietly. "He has been arrested . . ."

Mrs. Whittier screamed and tottered to a maid.

". . . by death," Barach concluded.

Mrs. Whittier fainted. The rector fell back gasping. Simeon Penberry stood for a moment stunned, but quickly recovered and demanded explanations.

They were brief. Alden had appeared at "Craggmont" and insisted on seeing the doctor, on the threat of invoking police power. The secretary had gone in search of him. Alden did not wait, but, entirely familiar with the house, had followed. They found the doctor at length, sitting at his desk in his room in the laboratory, just as Marian was entering. Alden had not noticed that the doctor was dead, but had hurried past him to the girl. David Barach had meantime entered from the street and was on his way down the corridor when the gruesome discovery was made.

"In an adjoining room we found Senator Chaddock," Barach continued. "The police have taken charge of him. But he had nothing to do with it, for the doctors said Roake went with apoplexy."

"And Marian?"

"Alden did not permit her to go into the room where Roake's body was, but took her back through the corridor and away in his car. I doubt if she knows that Roake is dead. Alden probably took her to Madam Galuth's."

"And that blackguardly Roake had sent for her, eh? Meaning mischief!"

"Yes. And she had the courage to go. But when she went to face him, why, he wasn't there!"

"Damme!"

An odd look came into Barach's face. "It was a proof of what she so often told us on our travels: when you go to face evil understandingly you will find that it is not there."

The police quickly took charge of the premises. The coroner was notified, as were the newspapers and the Executive Committee in the office of Doctor Lann. Mrs. Whittier was carried upstairs; and the rector and physicians went to break the news to Ethel and minister to her.

After a further consultation with the police, Simeon Penberry, who had held to Barach, announced that there was nothing further for him to do there and that he wanted to be taken to Marian. "Come on," he commanded, "take me to that girl! My *granddaughter!* The *real* Penberry heiress! Damme! But I might have known it . . . she was so like . . . But, oh, those Whittiers! Br-r-r-r!"

At the door of the Galuth home Marian and Alden met them. The girl flew into her grandfather's arms with a cry of joy. The report of the rector's revelation of her identity had reached her, for Doctor Rowley had telephoned the tidings to Madam

Galuth. And Doctor Benson had incoherently reported it to her from the city. The amazed girl had sat long, musing on it. Then, before her astonished vision, she saw the broken links of a long chain united.

The old man struggled desperately against his emotion as he clasped her in his arms, but found his struggle vain. At last he broke down completely. "But I'm not really crying!" he declared brokenly. "I'm not crying, y' understand! I'm no bally woman!" But as he crushed the girl to his breast his tears flowed fast.

"But . . . but where's that wonderful creature . . . Madam Galuth?" he asked at length. "I've a debt to square with her for . . . for caring for you . . . all these years, my little girl, and for sending you to me. Damme! I believe she knew this all the time!"

"She is upstairs," Marian told him. "She will come down . . . soon. But, first, we have much to talk about, haven't we, you and I?" And then, sitting together on the little sofa hand in hand, they talked long of the manner of their meeting in London, of the Penberry Ambulance Corps, of the capture of Jerusalem, of their deliverance, and of their wonderful journey in the footsteps of the lost tribes of Israel.

It had been wonderful, indeed! And how marvelous was Truth, how insignificant the material fiction! "We traced 'em!" he cried enthusiastically. "We found 'em, you and I! And . . . it was the same route that *she* took! But," his voice dropping, "we didn't find *her.*"

And then, as he sat with bowed head, he added sadly: "She was an American woman, high-born, lofty in character, pure of soul. She was interested in the things that . . . that you have interested me in, little girl, the only things that count. But I scoffed at them then. Fool that I was! I was so worldly wise—she, so *truly* wise! How she loved her Bible! How she loved that old Pyramid! . . . Lord, my ignorance, my dense ignorance! I couldn't stand her spirituality. I . . . I deserted her . . . while we were in Jerusalem. I went down to the Rand, then to America. In the mining camps of the west I . . . I became enamored of a . . . a . . . dance-hall woman. She had a child, a daughter . . . God knows who the child's father was! I married the woman—though I had a wife living—and went back to the Rand. The woman died that same year. I brought her child up as my own, gave her every advantage, though I never adopted her. That child became, in time, Wilson Whittier's wife."

"Ethel's *mother?*" exclaimed Marian.

He nodded. Then: "I kept her secret, for I was myself

so sin-stained. Oh, yes, Mrs. Whittier and her husband knew that she was not my daughter. But they have never known that . . . that her mother and father were . . . never married. They do not know it now. And, had she behaved . . . had she been honest with me . . . I would have . . . I would now . . ."

"And you will anyway," Marian interrupted gently, reaching up and stroking the bronzed old face. "We are not judges, you know. Remember, we are really Israel."

"Yes, yes! And we found 'em, didn't we? We found 'em! But I didn't find . . . *her!*"

"But that was because your journey was not yet finished," she said.

He raised his startled eyes to hers.

"Lost Israel was found," she continued, "but not only in England, for part of Israel is in America . . . *here!*"

"Marian!" He seemed to divine something of tremendous import, and he was shaking with suppressed excitement.

"The word 'galuth'," she went on, "means 'exile'. . ."

"Madam Galuth!" he exclaimed, gripping her hands.

". . . Israel went into exile. But not to remain. For Israel had the Word. From the exile we received it. From this exile here I received it. . ."

He was on his feet and staring down at her. "Madam Galuth! *She?*"

The white-haired woman came softly down stairs and entered the room. Penberry fell back, devouring her with famished eyes. She came toward him with a smile. He clutched feebly at the air. "Marian!" he gasped. "It *is* Marian! Your hair . . . it is white . . . but your face . . . it is the woman's I loved. . . Oh, God! It is *Marian!*"

The woman stood before him. "Yes," she said gently, "I am Marian. And this," taking the girl's hand, "is *our* Marian, the daughter of our boy, Max."

"Marian! Marian! . . . God forgive . . . forgive. . ."

Simeon Penberry's arms went slowly out and around the woman's slender figure. He drew her tenderly toward him. His trembling lips touched her white hair. Then he bowed his head over her and sobbed aloud. . .

It was a busy day at Madam Galuth's little cottage. It was a very busy day at the newspaper offices. It was an extraordinarily busy day for the Crestelridge gentility, who rushed hither and yon in their high-powered cars, gaping, babbling, retrieving, scheming. Mrs. Tellus telephoned her husband to come right home and prepare to go with her at once to "Craggmont"—"Although," she excitedly informed him, "I don't know but what we had better go to Madam Galuth's first to see

Marian! Have you read the accounts of it in the 'extras'? She's a *Penberry!*". . .

Almost hourly throughout the day the "extras" poured hot from the clanging presses. Simeon Penberry, in his consuming joy, could not be restrained from summoning eager reporters, to whom he excitedly gave the details of the discovery of his long-lost wife in Madam Galuth. "Think of it!" cried Mrs. Tellus, hurrying from the thrilled McBeans to the fluttering Flahertys, thence to the gaping Nences, the dumfounded Kerls, the astonished Blacks, "the Galuth is his *wife!* And Marian is their granddaughter! Oh! oh! oh! Who will get the Penberry money now?" And society, though it had treated these women like the refuse in Gehenna, now rose *en masse* to acclaim them.

The breaking up of the health convention was accorded proportionably scant space in the newspapers, crowded as they were with the vivid reports of the sudden death of the world's great benefactor, Dr. Jeremiah Roake, with fulsome eulogies of the man's unique character and work, and with dramatic accounts—copiously illustrated—of the revelation of the identities of the Galuth and Marian Whittier. There were shorter announcements of the rector's yielding of his rectorship, for that had not been established as yet, and the hastily summoned vestry of St. Jude's was to meet again that afternoon. . .

"By the Lord, I knew that girl was *somebody!*" cried Doctor Benson. And none rushed in and out of the Galuth home as often and as aimlessly as he.

It was a busy day for Marian; it was a busier one for Simeon Penberry, who leaped from cloud to cloud, nor knew where the earth was to be found. Nothing would do but that he must needs summon David Barach at once to draw up a new will, in which the old man bequeathed the Penberry millions, without reservation but for his wife's legal share, to Marian. "And I know how she will spend it!" he loudly declared. "And it won't be to make a place in silly society, nor to gain admission to the 'Norman Dames'! 'Norman Dames', indeed! Damme! Br-r-r-r!"

And, that accomplished, he imperiously summoned Alden and Barach again before him. He was the embodiment of dynamic energy, and the little house shook as he strode. "What are you fellows going to do now, eh?" he demanded, standing before them with his long legs spread and his hands jammed into his trousers' pockets. "Oh, I know what: you're going to work with *me!* Damme! but we've got a work to do! This Anglo-Israel idea. . ."

But Alden smiled and put an arm affectionately about the

excited old man's shoulders. "Our work is cut out for us," he said gently, "but we are taking orders from Marian. And I would remind you that you are, too."

From the office of Doctor Lann came a unique request, issued by the Executive Committee. Would Marian Whittier receive them? They had been in session with Judge Calwin. It had seemed wise, after further deliberation, to announce a postponement of the convention—the death of their leader afforded plausible ground. They were interested—intensely so —in her views as faintly voiced by David Barach and Doctor Rowley in the convention. Would she talk to them?

And she gladly told them she would, and set that evening, at the Galuth home, for the meeting. "And bring all who would care to come," she added. "Bring the doctors, the preachers, the legislators . . ."

"We'll take out the sides of the house if the place is too small!" shouted Penberry, who overheard the girl's words.

"And I must send for Zuleyka," he added, when she had issued her invitation and turned from the 'phone. For the Egyptian, who had begged to come to America with Penberry, "just to see that girl again," had been left at a hotel in the city to await instructions.

And there was another who telephoned to the girl that eventful day. Chaplain Muller had been in New York for some time. On the close of the war he could not bear to return to Germany, and had come to America to make a new home among friends here. He had read in the papers of the stirring events. Could he see her? And she delightedly bade him come.

Came then a telephoned report that brought Simeon Penberry down to the earth with a thud. It was from the local chief of police. Mrs. Whittier had demanded an investigation of the death of Doctor Roake. The girl, Marian, had been with him at the last, alone. . .

Penberry uttered an oath that shook the house, and, summoning Alden, bade him drive him posthaste to "Craggmont". There he stalked into the cowering Mrs. Whittier's presence and glowered down at her like a thunder cloud. "So!" he snarled. "So! You would make me play the trump card, eh? By the Lord, if you don't this minute call the chief and retract every damnable word that you've uttered against that girl, I'll go before Crestelridge society, I'll go before the 'Norman Dames', and I'll go to the newspapers, and tell 'em who you are! You are the illegitimate daughter of a dance-hall artiste, picked up in a western mining camp! That's the reason you never knew your father! And now, by the Lord, if you and Ethel don't pack up, as soon as Roake's under ground, and leave Crestelridge forever, I'll . . ."

"Father!"

"I sinned, and because of it I gave you a chance! I brought you up as my daughter—gave you everything that money would buy—hid the dirty secret of your parentage—married you honorably to Wilson Whittier! But you played me false . . ."

"Father! Oh, I'm fainting! Oh!"

"As for that conscienceless creature, Ethel, she had a chance, by the Lord! Alden Cragg sacrificed himself to save her name and that of her child fathered by that whelp, Harris Chaddock!"

"Father! Oh, don't! Oh, my country! I'll do anything you say! Anything! Oh!"

"'Norman Dames'! Br-r-r-r! You are no more descended from the Normans than the African negroes! I . . . I . . . Now listen," he continued more calmly, "you can't stay here any longer. 'Craggmont' never did belong to Roake. Marian set Barach to work in New York to unravel the affairs of the Cragg estate. The whole estate rightfully belongs to Barach, for it was the Jew's people who lent the elder Cragg the money years ago to build up his fortune, and he never paid it back. Alden now insists on making proper restitution, and Barach will come in for all that is left of the Cragg estate, if he wants it.

"But I'll agree to settle an allowance on you and Ethel sufficient to keep you comfortably the rest of your lives. But you must leave Crestelridge and go to some secluded place and live quietly the rest of your days. And if you ever voice a word of criticism of Marian, by the Lord, your allowance will be cut off and you'll end your days in poverty and disgrace! Roake's money is all involved in the Roake organization, and when his bills are paid I doubt if he'll have more than enough to bury him. So . . ."

Before Penberry left "Craggmont" a federal officer requested him to step into the doctor's study. There he was shown a document which they had discovered among the doctor's papers, the document in the red-sealed envelope that bore the inscription: *Concerning the family of the Reverend Wilson Whittier, Crestelridge, N. Y., U. S. A.*

The old man seized it and devoured it avidly. "By the Lord!" he shouted, "this is the very packet that Otto Hoeffel gave Zuleyka in the Tower of Antonia, and which she lost!"

"It confirms the report that Miss Whittier is your granddaughter if it is authentic," the officer ventured.

"Authentic!" Penberry exclaimed. "Otto Hoeffel was the cleverest man in the German Intelligence Department! Why, he actually visited me, my *guest!* And got information that was invaluable! He found some record regarding Marian, and

he was going to use it! But something happened to him down there in Jerusalem! Damme! Somebody evidently found the packet after the Egyptian lost it, and, seeing Wilson Whittier's name on it, sent it to him. And Roake intercepted it. By the L . . ."

On his return to the little cottage Penberry found the rector, sitting with Marian and Madam Galuth. Wilson Whittier had come to confess his part in the awful secret that had gnawed his breast these many years. But before he spoke Marian took his hand and bade him know that the Love which had restored them had forgiven his fault by destroying it.

"The details are few," the rector related in a choking voice, "but the iniquity was vast. Mrs. Whittier and I wanted children. One came to us, but it died in infancy. It seemed then, through the long years, that we should remain childless. We decided to adopt one. I went to a clergyman in Boston whose life was devoted to finding homes for abandoned babes. Sometimes he had the history of the child, often he did not. I found there an infant, a girl that greatly attracted me. And the clergyman had its story, in part. For it was the daughter of your disinherited son, Max, by an American wife."

"Yes," murmured Penberry, "I was proud. Max had always been wayward. And when he went to America and married I closed my doors against him. I have been punished!"

"His wife must have been an angel," the rector continued; "but the clergyman had no record of her, except that she died when her babe was a year old. Max was a wanderer, and he could not be burdened with the child. But he gave it his mother's name, Marian, and left an honorable, if brief, history with it when he delivered it to the clergyman for adoption."

"But did you find no trace of Max afterward?" Penberry eagerly asked.

"Yes," the rector replied sadly, "the government records show that he died gloriously in the battle at San Juan hill, in the Spanish-American war."

Penberry drew a deep sigh. "Max was more American than English," he said. "His mother," glancing toward Madam Galuth, "was an American."

"We took the babe," the rector resumed. "We took it . . ." His voice dropped low. "We took it because it was the only child in the Penberry line. We thought—Oh, the shame of it!—we thought that some day we might tell you of the adoption, and that you might become reconciled to the child and make her your heir.

"Alas! such wicked plans God turns awry. For soon a child was born to us, Ethel. And then my wife sorely regret-

ted that we had adopted Marian. She would have Ethel named in your will. I was weak. I yielded to her. We hid Marian in boarding schools and seminaries, and advanced Ethel, keeping her always before your attention, and influencing you to make her your heir. How we carried the terrible secret all these years is to me incomprehensible. But it cost me my manhood. It cost me my life—until in her I found true Life.

"Ethel never knew who Marian really was. She does not know now. Poor child, her sorrows have been many and poignant! We told no one that Mrs. Whittier was not your daughter, but the daughter of your second wife. For she was socially ambitious, and if society had known . . ."

Marian exclaimed aloud. "Oh," she cried, "see what it means to cover error! Error *can't* be ignored, it *can't* be left undisturbed, nor can one flee from it! It must be faced boldly, exposed, and destroyed by Truth!"

"Mrs. Whittier claimed descent from you," the rector went on, turning to Simeon Penberry. "It was wrong, and the lie brought its reward. We were going to claim your fortune through Ethel, while we knew that Marian was your rightful heiress. See what it brought! Our sins, like the wind, have taken us away! We have lost all—and yet in its place Marian has given me the only thing of real value in life, the right concept of God."

Marian went quickly to the sorrowing rector and stole an arm about his neck. He seized her hand gratefully and raised it to his quivering lips.

Silence lay upon them all. Penberry sat back, head sunk upon his chest, deep in thought. He understood now how Otto Hoeffel had learned that Marian was his granddaughter. Otto knew that the Boston clergyman made a business of placing babes in adoption. It was Otto's business to know such things, and to report the information to his imperial master in Berlin. And Otto wanted to marry Marian. "Oh, yes," the old man mused, "he wanted the Penberry money! So did Roake. But Otto played Roake false. Then something happened to Otto; he had a change of heart in Jerusalem; and before the city fell he wrote this confession and gave it to Zuleyka to hold for me. H'm! The ways of Providence are . . . But what became of Otto? I wonder. . ."

Then Penberry broke the silence. "Wilson," he said slowly and not unkindly, "we have both sinned. And because of it we have suffered the pangs of hell. But we have repented and made restitution. Your wife has as greatly sinned; yet she is still unrepentant. You wanted to do right, but were weak. She did not want the right, and was strong in this world's

ways. But we must not constitute ourselves her judges. We shall do right by her and by Ethel. And now, what are your plans?"

The rector smiled sadly. "I have just come from the rectory," he said. "The vestry summoned me. I was dismissed from St. Jude's and told to remove from the rectory at the earliest moment."

"Good!" Penberry exclaimed. "You're out of prison! You're ready for real work now, eh? I . . . But of course Marian's giving orders, you know."

"Oh," cried the girl, turning to the rector, "there is so much work for you! And for us all! There is a place awaiting you in the big plan, not the Roake plan, but God's plan. Awaiting you, and Alden, and David, and . . ."

"And old Penberry's millions back of it all!" ejaculated the excited old man.

Then Marian and Madam Galuth—now Madam Penberry—stole away upstairs to be alone with each other and their thoughts.

What impression the passing of Doctor Roake had made upon Marian was not apparent. She had not been informed of it until some time after arriving at the Galuth cottage. And then, whatever her comment, it had been spoken only to Alden, who had told her of the doctor's death.

And now, as the woman again voiced her measureless gratitude for the girl's deliverance, and again referred to the passing of Jeremiah Roake, Marian fell silent. But, after some moments, she looked up. "Woe unto him that striveth with his Maker," she said slowly. Nothing more. And Madam Penberry knew that the subject probably never would be discussed further by them.

Long they sat, deep in their thoughts. And when the silence was broken, it was the woman who spoke. "Chaplain Muller is coming to-night because of the help you gave him in Jerusalem." She paused and awaited the girl's reply. None came. Then she drew nearer and put an arm about Marian's waist. "Dearie," she said softly, "I know—in part—I know. And I know that, because of it, to you and to Alden has been given a knowledge of the nothingness of death. Having gotten the spiritual fact, you stood. Through all the diabolism directed against you, you stood, knowing that not one word of Truth is ever lost. Or, as Luke's statement is often translated: 'No word from God shall be void of power.' You and Alden became persuaded that nothing could separate you from Principle. Alden at length came to be regarded here as either supernatural or insane - thus does the ignorant carnal mind judge those

to whom the Light has come. But it was only because he knew God and did not fear."

Marian smiled up at her. "He was a Daniel," she said. "Dan means 'judge', and 'El' is God; so Daniel was God's judge, before whom evil was condemned to its native nothingness."

"Dearie," said the woman, "you have been made a righteous judge too. And God used you to judge Simeon Penberry and Wilson Whittier. . ."

"You knew who Simeon Penberry was," the girl interposed. "You knew it, and you purposely sent me to him."

The woman gave a happy little laugh. "I was sure it would work out that way," she said. "And when Lady Chorris came to me . . ."

"Lady Chorris?" the girl queried.

"Why, yes. She was the nurse who took you to Simeon Penberry. It was because of her great influence that so much was accomplished."

Marian sat looking at her wonderingly. Then, taking her hand: "Oh, you have followed me and watched over me all my life!" Her eyes filled with tears. "Your good thoughts were always my guardian angels! But—how did you know when I was adopted as a babe?"

"My boy Max came to me," the woman answered. "After his wife had passed on. Wilson Whittier does not know this. It was—as the world would say—mere chance that Max discovered me on the street one day. He told me about his child. I begged him to bring you and come to live with me. But I never saw him again. Then I suspected that he might have given you for adoption. So I made a search. I learned that a child bearing your name had been adopted by the Whittiers. And I followed you. I . . . I had something to give you . . . something that I knew they had not. It was the Word."

The girl turned and threw her arms about the woman's neck. And thus they sat until, at length, Marian raised her head. "God opens the way, always, when we work and pray with the right motives—doesn't He?"

"He directs our paths always," was the reply, "when we seek Him with right-thinking and then, having grasped the spiritual fact, patiently, lovingly, knowingly *stand*."

CHAPTER 29

"CRAGGMONT", dark and shrouded in mist, stood that night like a huge funeral urn, draped with a pall.

On the opposite hill the Galuth cottage glowed brightly. Up the steep ascent Doctors Rowley and Benson were toiling. " 'The eternal womanhood leads us on', as Goethe sang," puffed Rowley.

"Hold on there!" cried Benson, stopping and leaning against a tree to rest. "That fellow was a German!"

"Great heavens, man!" Rowley exclaimed, "I hope you are not going through life hating the Germans! Have you learned nothing from Marian?"

"Well . . . yes," the other admitted reluctantly. "But, you understand, I don't believe all . . ."

"Rubbish! You are merely incredulous; while she has proved her words. And mere incredulity, I would remind you, is 'the surest sign of a weak head and a corrupt heart'. Don't let any erroneous suggestions now corrupt you."

"But I can't help believing that a lot of these things just happened. They were mere chance. Fortuitous. . ."

Rowley took Benson's arm. "Look here," he said, "error is getting in its work to cloud your thought. There is but *one* Cause, the infinite creative Mind. But mortals attribute cause to almost anything else. The mortal mind sees what it believes and believes what it sees. The result is nothing but a constantly passing panorama of error, which it calls life. The mortal mind's system of theorizing without Principle gives rise to the belief that man is helpless in the grip of circumstances, and that events merely *happen*. But that is error's method of working. It keeps our mental gaze focused on effects instead of the mental causes. Wake up, Benson! There is no necessity or power of evil. Circumstances are of human invention."

"But supposing Roake hadn't happened to die just when he did?"

"My dear fellow, Marian was not after Roake. She was after the ideas that used him. And she had those foul. His downfall was certain. But he was crushed by his own accumulation of evil. And how far-reaching that evil was! There wasn't an avenue of human existence that it did not penetrate! It was even causing a split between Great Britain and the United States. We were steadily drifting toward war. It would have been suicide for Britain and us! But because of the data which she, through Penberry, laid before Parliament

after tracing the lost tribes of Israel, the differences which Roake and his gang had stirred up between England and America were quietly settled, and Roake was about to be apprehended."

"By heaven!"

"I am not an apologist for all of England's acts, now or in times past," Rowley went on. "But I do know that unless these two great English-speaking peoples unite in harmony and peace civilization is doomed. Error has tried desperately to separate them, in order to destroy the Word."

"You're right! The preachers failed . . ."

"Now Marian," Rowley went on, "has been condemned as a carping critic of orthodox religion; but let me tell you that it is her *idealism* that has stirred up this criticism. She sees perfection and the possibility of attaining it, and I don't blame her for being impatient with those who, like Whittier and Roake, either ignorantly or maliciously keep blocking our halting progress toward it. I admit, the only worth-while sort of criticism is that which is constructive. But Marian's is in the highest sense constructive: she tears away the false, but gives the real in substitution for it. The materialistic preachers and the political doctors . . ."

"You're right, Rowley! By heaven, I've said so all the time!"

"And while the preachers and doctors block progress, the aggressive features of animal magnetism come to the fore and plunge us into wars and calamities, enslave us as Roake was seeking to do, and set civilization back another thousand years. I say, God send us more such 'carping' critics as Marian!"

"You're right! By heaven. . ."

Within the little cottage Simeon Penberry sat with Chaplain Muller, who had come early, while Marian and Madam Penberry were still upstairs. David Barach had gone to bring Zuleyka. Alden was on his way to Doctor Lann's office to return with the Executive Committee and all who had accepted Marian's invitation.

"So-o-o!" Penberry ejaculated, after he had drawn from Chaplain Muller the story of Otto Hoeffel's fate. "He went to the firing squad! Went voluntarily! And for . . . her!"

He fell silent as the chaplain nodded. But presently he spoke again. "Muller," he said very low, "don't tell her. Don't . . . not yet. I will do it . . . at the right time. Damme! He gave his life for her. . ."

"*Ach,* yes, Mr. Penberry. But do not forget that she gave him a knowledge of Life eternal. The debt is still his." And Penberry nodded. He knew it was so.

Then Alden, Zuleyka, Barach, and the delegates came. And with them Rowley and Benson and Boots. Simeon Penberry effusively welcomed them all. He would have embraced them each. He was everywhere. He monopolized the conversation. And none would have guessed from observation of the eager, almost childishly animated old man that he was one of Britain's greatest figures.

Then Marian came—down the stairs lightly, swiftly, her face aglow, her whole being radiant with the inner light. She came smiling; and she squeezed Alden's hand as she passed him in the hall, and threw a kiss to Zuleyka, whom she saw with Simeon Penberry in the rear of the room. And as she faced the waiting people she opened her arms and cried: "Oh, I love you, *love* you all!"

They rose in a body. They rose as one, in instant response to a love that had met such tests and conquered. They would have prostrated themselves at her feet, had she asked such obeisance.

"Oh, I bring you good news!" she cried. "The news that God is good, that He is available, that He has *not* left Himself without a witness among you, that He has not been without witnesses in all ages to the metaphysical basis of life!

"I come to you from Egypt, with fresh witnesses. There in the excavations in the ancient Fayum I saw hundreds of documents unearthed that had been written when Jesus of Nazareth was teaching in Galilee. And they were written in the common Greek spoken everywhere throughout the Roman Empire at that time. This was the dialect of the middle classes. *It is the exact language of the New Testament.* And these documents now show that the four Gospels were written in a dialect and style that no literary man of that time would have used, but that the common people spoke and wrote and loved.

"And they show that, possibly excepting the second letter of Peter, the entire New Testament was written within the first century of the Christian era. And, more, they show that *the text of no other ancient book is now so certain as it.* The charge that the New Testament was originated or changed by the emperor Constantine has been completely refuted. Likewise the charge that it has been tampered with throughout the ages.

"Oh, you preachers, there is now nothing more firmly established than that Jesus of Nazareth *said* what is attributed to him in the New Testament and *did* what is told of him there! He healed the sick, he raised the dead, and he at last overcame the world, the entire material concept. He did not sit

back and wait to die to go to heaven; he *worked out his salvation.* And he commanded us to do the same—for there is no other way—and to teach others how to do it. Well, why, oh, why don't you *do it?*

"Oh, you doctors, it has been established that Luke was once a doctor, but that he dropped his uncertain material methods of healing for the sure and scientific metaphysical method employed by Jesus. His Gospel contains many medical and technical terms. It has been thought by some that his prolog is in imitation of the beginning of the great work on *materia medica* by Dioscorides, and that a copy of this must have been in Luke's library. But Luke was an honest physician, seeking Truth. And because of it he learned *true* healing.

"Oh, you preachers who oppose the spiritualizing of the Bible, learn this: that the earliest records are 'mystical', like the Gospel of John. Know this: that *primitive* Christianity was given *in a metaphysical form.* Nothing can be more firmly established than that the symbolical language used in the New Testament was for the purpose of conveying stupendous *metaphysical* facts. For the only facts are metaphysical, did you but know it. Nothing is more firmly established than that to human sense the physical, the material, comes first, then the metaphysical, though it is the only reality. We have the literal story of Jesus in the first three Gospels; but the truth regarding the Christ is revealed in the Gospel of John. The philosophy of the New Testament as expressed in this Gospel is *the unreality of matter.* Can you not accept then the all but established report that John worked out his salvation and rose out of the material concept, even as did his Master?

"Oh, why do not these great facts convince you? Why do you so stubbornly fight on the side of matter, even while it mesmerizes you to deprive you and your people of life? All must some day accept Truth; yet you fight it because it would destroy the material beliefs with which you are content, it would destroy the material conditions which you think prevail. In the language of the soldier, the human mind has fought from trench to trench for something material that would connect it with God—and in vain, for between Spirit and matter there is no bond.

"Oh, you preachers, the newly discovered records show that Jesus said, 'I am the vine of *truth*'. But Jesus taught an omnipotent First Cause, and proved that the carnal mind was the 'lie' about it. A lie is always a suppositional opposite. Thought, by its activity, becomes externalized as consciousness. And so you cannot avoid demonstrating what you know. If your

knowledge is material, you bring out a material sense of existence, discordant and doomed to extinction in death. Jesus demonstrated his knowledge of the One Cause. And he overcame the material concept and death. So he bade us 'be ye perfect'.

"Oh, you preachers, what did Jesus mean when he bade men deny themselves? What, but that they must deny reality to the *entire material concept of life?* For the supposed outer world, as you have been told, is within mankind themselves. For men are mentalities, things of thought. And matter is wholly mental, and is posited within these mentalities.

"In the British Museum is an ancient Latin manuscript, supposedly a portion of the records of the early African Church. In this is recorded a conversation between Jesus and the apostle John, in which the latter asks if there is a real material creation, a material earth, and a material man. And the Master answers with an emphatic *no.* Oh, very significant is this, that the Master-metaphysician should have talked thus metaphysically with the author of the most metaphysical of the gospels! Where else, indeed, could John get his metaphysical ideas?

"Oh, if you did not fear to 'over-spiritualize' the Bible you might read how Jesus taught that Spirit created—*revealed*—all; and how the suppositional opposite must needs seem to rise to counterfeit God's work by the suppositional revelation of a material universe and a man of matter, both mental, both seeming to be real, yet both figments of false thought. The first chapter of Genesis, with a few verses of the second, tell of the spiritual creation, or revelation; the second chapter tells of the suppositional opposite, where, in the mist of illusion, material man was formed of matter, itself a mental thing.

"But you, believing firmly in matter, and declaring that God created it, ignore the spiritual record and deal only in and with the mortal mind that counterfeits the Mind that is God. You know not that, to mortal, material sense, wherever Spirit is, there must *seem* to be matter; wherever Good is, there must *seem* to be evil; wherever Truth is, there must *seem* to be error. And that this accounts for the seeming omnipresence of the material concept. Oh, you mesmerized by the serpent! Like the Israelites of old, you have gone after very strange gods. Not golden calves, nor the humanly endowed gods of Olympus, but the 'strong reasons' which you put forth to prove the reality of matter and the presence and power of evil! It is these 'strong reasons' and their hypnotic influence that Jesus bade you put off. But you go on dealing with the human man, which is but the human mind expressed. And the human mind

is the expression of mortal mind, so-called. As expressed in the human race, the human mind is mortal mind putting forth the claim to 'be as gods', to know both good and evil, and to rise, through evolution, from imperfection into perfection. But all sin, evil, sickness, catastrophe, suffering, and death are externalized in this human expression of mortal mind. For it is naught but mortal mind itself, and error. For mortal mind is ignorance of Truth.

"But has the human mind the power to redeem itself? The human mind can abandon its false beliefs. When a false belief is no longer entertained, it disappears, for it has no sustaining Principle. To 'take up the cross', as Jesus bade us, is to take up the task of abandoning the material beliefs of the carnal mind. Laying them down, we see the reality, based on Principle, behind the fleshly veil.

"Mortal existence is like a dream, illusory. The Mind that is God sees it not, for Mind can know no illusion, no evil. Those engulfed in the human dream are disinclined to get rid of the false beliefs that constitute the mesmeric illusion. So they suffer and die. But they may, if they will, lay down the finite concepts, false beliefs, in which they seemingly dwell and of which they are made. This is to work out one's salvation and acquire heaven. And Jesus did it. And was too wise, too loving, to bid us do likewise if he had not known that, depending on Principle, we could.

"The human mind is enveloped in the 'mist' of erroneous belief. All that it sees of the Divine is its own objectified physical sense. For the human mind is but *a sense of matter.* Unless one believes thoroughly that matter lives, he cannot believe in human birth, growth, maturity, decay, and death. If God, Mind, is omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent, there can be no other power that causes pain and unhappiness. And to believe that there can be is to sentence yourself to suffer and sorrow and die. Such belief breaks the First Commandment and is sin.

"The human mind is a product of false education. The mentality of the new-born babe is all but a blank. It has been formed of the parents' thought; and it comes into conscious existence with but a few instincts, derived from them. Its ignorance is pitiable; its weakness lamentable. And its future is deplorable, for what it will become depends upon the educated beliefs fed to it as truth. It is taught that life is material; that pain and suffering are real; that drugs heal; that disasters happen. It is *not* taught that its thoughts and beliefs and all that it accepts as reality will become externalized, either in its body or its environment. And so it goes haphazard

through this sense of existence to oblivion, without knowing that Jesus bade mankind deny themselves by refusing to accept the material education that leads to death.

"Oh, you preachers, what a responsibility is yours! You discover that you are not wearing Elijah's mantle, for you have not demonstrated the ability to do so. You still disobey your great Captain's commands. The dragon Tiamat fell before Merodach, god of light, in the legends of the east. So the dragon of a suppositional opposite to Spirit and the spiritual Creation must fall before the Light that Jesus revealed. But can you see that Light? Not through your material veil. But, oh, why will you hug to yourselves this awful illusion called matter, knowing that the origin of every ill, every sin, every sorrow, and death itself is in it? You are bewitched!

"But you would improve the human mind, you say. But to improve really means to 'disprove'. And the only way to improve the human mind is to *disprove* it. Through *disproving* is thought liberated. The liberated human concept becomes the Jesus-concept, the working consciousness, working in the intermediate and effecting a re-formation. This rebukes, disproves, denies, wipes out the false claims of corporeal power. Human belief—which is of the *humus,* dust—cannot help you; but divine thoughts, angels, passing from the Mind that is God to man, will transform by disproving and destroying the material beliefs and false sense-impressions from error's suggestions that make up the mortal man. Do you believe it? Or will you go on insisting that the human mind is real, and encouraging the very lusts of the flesh that are destroying you? You are not Christians merely because you believe the Bible true; you are not ministers of the Word until you demonstrate Truth. Until you make such demonstration, your claims lie buried in dead tradition.

"You came here to the great health-council seeking health, you preachers; but you sought it in matter, for you have yielded your birthright to the physicians. Yet physical health, however robust, eventually fails. And so there is no health in the body, for bodily health is a mortal *belief* of health. Physical strength fails, for it is but a *belief* of life and power in material muscles and cannot be sustained. Mortal life is death. And no heaven awaits. Dying here, you will awake in another environment, in another mental sphere. And what you awake to depends on your beliefs, your thoughts, your mental concepts, on what you hold to be real and true. Why, do you suppose, the Bible says so little about a future life? Because *there is none!* Jesus dealt with endless Life; he demonstrated it, and bade us do likewise. And until we

do we shall die, die, die! Paul said that Jesus brought immortality to light—showing that immortality is the *fact*, and death the *illusion*. Heaven is the present harmonious reality, to be attained by abandoning the material beliefs of the 'one lie'. From dream of life to dream of life must mortals pass, until they are willing to take up the cross of denying themselves. Then they will have begun real healing.

"Oh, you preachers, you doctors, the material world is sick unto death. And there is but one *real* authority on the healing art, the Bible. The Indian medicine-man's chant contained the thought that this is a perfect world and man cannot be sick. He seemed to see dimly the reality beyond the mist. *Materia medica* knows as little of true healing as it knows of God, for real healing is the destruction in consciousness of all that appears to oppose Principle. Therefore it is wholly mental, spiritual. It is a laying down of false beliefs and concepts that the real may appear. And it is always, in some degree, the destruction of the human mind. Absolute healing would be its complete destruction. But what causes disease? Germs? No. A mind made inharmonious by discordant concepts, ideas, and beliefs is reflected in a body diseased. Yet a diseased mortal is but a lie about Mind, a denial of God. And the removal of the lie removes its discordant effects. *But it is all mental!*

"Yet, though human belief alone causes disease, the sick—with the habit of running to the doctor bred in their bones—turn not to Mind, but to matter and material modes for relief. Pain is a state of consciousness. Likewise is a cold, a fever, a bruise. In the thirty-sixth chapter of the Book of Job you will find stated the cause and the cure of afflictions. But for real healing, it is necessary *not* to believe in the presence and power of evil. But, on this basis, oh, you preachers, do you heal? Is not evil to you a tremendous reality? Though you preach an omnipotent God, do you not believe sickness mightier than health, and death than life? And do you not preach that God permits this? Oh, ye of little understanding! How long? Can you not know that only the eternal is the real? And if evil is real, can it ever be overcome?

"Oh, you would admit that healing is sometimes accomplished by 'mental suggestion', and by prayer to a reluctant God. But mental suggestion is but manipulation by the human mind. It is hypnotism. And suggestion, as has been vividly demonstrated in these past days, takes from the sufferer his individuality and leaves him more susceptible to evil suggestions than before. And true prayer is not the petition to God to be good, but is the understanding affirmation of the allness of Spirit and the nothingness of its suppositional opposite, the carnal

mind, animal magnetism. For this prayer without ceasing we need not special days nor the siren's shriek to summon us to the task. The Christ-healing cures morally and physically. But mere affirmations will not destroy error. The sole potency of the affirmation is its truthfulness; and in the knowledge of God possessed by the healer lies the issue of demonstration. For he who does not *live* Truth, as Jesus lived the fact that he and the Father were one, cannot heal. But do you live Truth, oh, you doctors? Or do you deny God daily by giving life and intelligence to matter?

"Matter! Why, your own philosophers tell you that matter is an 'abstraction or manifestation of force or energy'—that 'all the qualities of matter are what the mind makes them, and have no existence as such apart from the mind'—that 'apart from consciousness, there are no such things as color, form, position, or hardness, and there is no such thing as matter'. But it is not matter as lumps of solid stuff that we must rid ourselves of, but *the material sense of things,* which falsely informs us that there is matter in lumps, that it is solid, real, that we touch it, handle it, walk on it, eat it, and that it has life and sensation, that it suffers and dies. This material sense is the serpent that must be destroyed. And material sense is only the supposition that Spirit is absent. For matter is the way the human or mortal mind regards real Substance—it is the inverted way the mortal mind conceives of Spirit, of reality. It is a vagary of mortal belief.

"And on this false basis the mortal mind builds. But, building without the support of Principle, its house of life totters, decays, and soon falls into ruin. And so the average span of human life is what it is to-day, thirty-three short years! And the mortal mind boasts of the knowledge of matter which it gets from the five physical senses, although—oh, the irony of it!—the average intelligence of man is less than that of a child of ten years. Yet on this false testimony from the physical senses it continues to build; and the higher it builds the greater the chaos and the more certain its doom. Can you not read it in history? For human history is the counterfeit of divine unfoldment, and, without basis of Principle, it lapses, halts, goes seemingly forward, totters, runs haphazard, then falls. The materialistic basis of civilization led to the war just closed, in error's frenzied effort to destroy Truth. And it is leading to still others. For there is no peace in mortal mind. Its sense of ease in material conditions is mesmerism amid direst perils. Mankind are the dupes of material sense. What men call seeing, touching, hearing, smelling, tasting, are merely the human mind's limited interpretation of the infinite

Idea. That Idea is ever-present, though quite unseen by material man.

"But, you say, the philosophers deduced the fact of matter's unreality. True. But they did not carry their deductions into practice, but lived just as materially as before. They reduced matter to a phenomenon dependent upon mind, or energy, but did not proceed and reduce that mind itself to its native unreality as a counterfeit of the Mind that is God. *Yet Jesus did just this!* And on the basis of matter as physical energy, and the latter the lie of mind as opposed to Mind, he performed his so-called miracles and at last overcame the world of matter and its discords. If you really *know* the truth, as he did, that matter is a state of mind, you too can walk on the water, heal the sick, and raise the dead. Oh, you preachers and doctors, would you but know that there is nothing with which the mortal mind so deceives mankind as the belief that matter is substance and real!

"And the philosophers of to-day are fast disproving the false claims of matter. The recently discovered theory of relativity reveals the material universe in a new light. All motion is found to be but relative—there is nothing at rest in the universe. It is shown that space is not of three dimensions only, but of many, and that *time and space are distinct properties of matter and could not exist without it.* It is shown that every movement in the universe takes place in a space of many dimensions, but that each mentality sees it taking place in a space limited to the number of dimensions which that mentality can comprehend. The space of three dimensions as comprehended by mankind is a distortion of the space cognized by a mentality that can comprehend four dimensions. And the greater the number of dimensions a mentality can comprehend, the greater the degree of freedom experienced by that mentality. A serpent is limited in its thought to two dimensions, and so crawls upon the ground; but an eagle comprehends three dimensions and has therefore greater freedom. As our ignorance is replaced by Truth our vision broadens and we begin to live in many dimensions and so enjoy greater freedom. Freedom is, therefore, a function of the broadening of our mental grasp. Matter and materiality are, as has been said, 'merely a present point of view of our limited mentality. With unfolding thought, then, matter would lose its seeming quality of substantiality and time and space as now conceived would go with it'.

"Yet wherever matter *seems* to be, there is God, there is Substance. Finding ourselves seemingly in a world of matter, it is our task to rid ourselves of the material sense, not to love

it and cling to it as all that is real. If, back of the sense-impression of the beauties of earth, of the lofty peaks, the green valleys, the forests, the brooks, we see Mind and its Idea, we shall turn from the imperfect and fleeting symbol, until at last we shall see it no more, but shall be conscious of reality only, the new heaven and the new earth. That consciousness will be lasting, and far more beautiful, more wonderful, more satisfying, than the material one we believe we possess now. And it may be attained, as Jesus taught, through right-thinking, and on that basis truly healing the sick."

CHAPTER 30

SHE paused and stood looking at them. Then a smile came into her face. "I know what some of you are saying," she resumed. "That the last twelve verses of Mark's Gospel were not written by Mark, but are a later addition, perhaps as late as the third century. But it will not do, for, as a Bible scholar has pointed out, if that were true it would only prove that as late as the third century Christians regarded the healing of the sick and the raising of the dead as a test of their understanding of Christianity.

"But then, when the Roman world swallowed Christianity at the bidding of its master, Constantine, complete materialization followed. The Word was buried. And there was developed the material concept of Christianity which you preachers would foist upon the world to-day. Is it strange that the Japanese are not attracted to your undemonstrable religious beliefs? That Russia's soviet government has proclaimed that there is no life after death; that there is only the material existence, ending in oblivion; and that the Christian religion must be destroyed as inimical to human welfare on earth? Can you understand now why there is a persistent anti-Christian drift throughout the world to-day? Why the real Armageddon is still to come? And why the churches cannot unite? What have they to unite on, but mortal belief and changeable human opinion? What do your church drives accomplish? Christians are not made with money! Cash will not reform the world! Why is the Church facing to-day the greatest crisis in its history? Why is it losing influence? Because you preachers will not obey your Captain's commands. Because you preach such materialistic doctrines as would astound Jesus were he to listen. *'Thy way and thy doings have procured these things unto thee!'* The evidence before the

physical senses vanishes before the spiritual fact; but *you refuse to accept the fact!* Your thoughts are of a material universe and man, to be exchanged in death for the spiritual. *'Hear, O earth, behold I will bring evil upon these people, even the fruit of their thoughts!'* Jesus was a human being, a man; the Christ is God's manifestation of Himself. The Christ was manifested through Jesus, who was the purest of earth's channels. But Jesus was *not* God. And his Church—the only real Church—is not a function of sects nor a social aggregation, but is made up of those who have gained a knowledge of Principle and its spiritual idea, the Christ, and who are bringing forth this knowledge in demonstration, as Jesus did, by destroying sin, sickness, sorrow, all evil, and death. Is your church doing this? Then is it not the foe of Christianity? And because you have repudiated the Christ-healing, the suffering world is driven to the materialistic doctors!

"And the doctors delve into psychology and anatomy to learn what man is, and from this basis to employ material means to treat the effect and cure him of his ills induced by his thought! Health is *wholeness;* and disease is not its correlative. Health is never absent if God is ever-present. The study of error and its operations has not enabled you to overcome error, as you well know. But the study of God enabled Jesus to demonstrate Life. But to know God aright gives also the right knowledge of error as His suppositional opposite, and therefore enables us to destroy the illusion.

"And having the healing Christ-knowledge, each will stand upon his own feet, each will become his own physician. And hospitals, with their horrors, and sanitariums, and medical organizations, and health boards, and factory-made medicines, and inert pills will all cease to be. Diseases will then no longer multiply, and the inhabitant shall no more say: 'I am sick'.

"Oh, my friends all, the Kingdom of Heaven *is* established, and you may enter if you will! Some day you must. The sense in which Jesus and his hearers understood the Kingdom was lost when Christianity passed from the Jewish people to the Græco-Roman world. He insisted that the reign of harmony was an ever-present reality, that health was always present. Had this not been so, he could not have performed his great works. And if you doubt that he did those works, then the abundant evidence that has in these last days come to light must dispel your doubt. Jesus characterized sin and sickness as one when he said: 'Thy sins be forgiven thee.' For sin, as he taught, is a missing of the mark. And sin obtains only in the carnal mind.

"Oh, how can you believe that you are obeying your Captain

when you believe in minds many? Believing thus, it is utterly impossible for you to love your neighbor as yourself. You cannot love error. But the truth that there is but one Mind denies the reality of matter and sets man free.

"Oh, you doctors, who proclaim that the human body is a poison factory! What makes it so? False, poisonous, human thought, naught else! And pills and lotions will not change it. Salvation is not through such propaganda as the druggists are sending forth to you doctors, advising that you add coloring and inert ingredients to simple, white remedies, since then the patient will regard the remedy as of greater importance! Deception! Falsity! Can you heal on that basis? What do the druggists say further? That you doctors should vary your prescriptions, thus educating the patient to believe that you are 'up' in *materia medica* and giving the case your individual attention! They advise you not to tell the patient how a medicine will act, lest it act differently. Thus uncertain, experimental, and deceptive is your whole practice!

"Oh, if you would know that true healing is done only in love! For thus Jesus healed. But Love works not through mesmerism, witchcraft, and malpractice. It is animal magnetism that claims the power of God. And you are yielding to it. Animal magnetism chose this health organization and its leader to be its channels—and in the wake of its choice there is death, death, death! Mental suggestion warped the German thought; it has warped yours. The deliberately projected propaganda of animal magnetism, through mesmerism, has swept over the world to make null the Word. It voices itself learnedly through you in discourses on 'psycho-analysis', the 'Freudian wish', in that study of the erroneous human mind known as psychology, and in the development of criminal organizations throughout the world for the study and practice of hypnotism to control human thought and activity—all in order that the Word may be destroyed in the impossible advancement of evil!

"Oh, hear me! For I bring you good news! The primitive Christianity which, in the fourth century, sank from sight under the wave of materialism, covered by animal magnetism, has again appeared among you! By it the sick are healed, the dead are raised! I have brought it to you! I have taught it, practiced it, proved it! *The Christ has come again!*

"And again the suppositional forces of evil are arrayed against it, and ofttimes using even those who need it most, and those who are professing it. It is again threatened with obscurity by ecclesiasticism and the imperialism of the Cæsars. Aggressive mental suggestion is the world's greatest menace to-day, and few there be who recognize it and employ the

Christ-knowledge to destroy it. Salvation is not by nations or groups. Error, evil, will be destroyed when it ceases to be entertained as truth in human consciousness. That work is individual. And if primitive Christianity, once again restored, is permitted to be driven again into centuries of hiding, such frightful times will come upon earth as have not yet been known. And the betrayers of the Christ will suffer most.

"Because Christianity is again among you, suggestion of evil is rampant. By it mankind are consciously or unconsciously influenced to believe or to do or to feel evil, without knowing how or why they have been thus influenced, or why they have changed their thoughts, their feelings, or their actions. Would you have proofs? Then follow the history of your own organization and the conduct of your leader!

"Oh, you doctors, you preachers, there is salvation! *Salvation is freedom from the grasp of matter.* And it is won through the renewing of your mind. It is won through obedience—and obedience, as Abraham showed, is alert dependence on Principle.

"Oh, you specialists! Jesus was a specialist—in Truth. And he saw not malignant germs everywhere, and death in every conceivable situation. He knew that nothing but Mind exists; he knew the therapeutic value of right thinking; he wrestled with the devil of human consciousness, in what you preachers call his temptations—he was tempted, as was your leader, to conquer the world. And he did conquer it, by destroying his material concept of it.

"But, you say, he put his fingers in the deaf man's ears, and spat, and touched the patient's tongue, as recorded by Mark. And did he not thus use material modes?

"Alas! how ignorant is the world of the meaning of his acts. Spitting was to the Jews a sign of repudiation. Thus did Jesus symbolize his repudiation of the false claim of deafness. He closed the man's ears with his fingers, symbolizing the necessity of closing one's hearing to the voice of error claiming to dominate man. He looked away from earth toward the heavens, showing how completely he relied on God and how absolutely he rejected all material means of healing.

"Oh, you who pretend to read the Bible understandingly, do you know that Jesus did no work of healing until he had fasted to materialism in the wilderness of human beliefs? That gave him his diploma! But he did not go out then to pollute the blood of his patients with poisons, or mutilate the body with surgical operations, for he knew that these things did not make whole. He did not depend on the human mind to inform him what is good and what bad. Oh, he knew that the

human mind loves nothing better than to give such advice, though it lead but to the pit! He did not go into society and waste his days and his nights 'visiting' about the most trivial things of the mortal mind. He did not converse on the unwholesome things of existence; he did not talk disease, accidents, catastrophe, nor blazon these to the world as 'news'. He did not chatter with his friends on the banal frivolities, the vaporings and froth of human thinking. He knew that these but bind the chains of materiality more firmly upon mankind—and he was in the business of loosing these chains.

"But he talked of God—the mention of Whose name in polite conversation in these last days would be an unpardonable intrusion.

"And he brought salvation to a world starving for love. Oh, will you learn of it and bestow it upon a dying world? Or will you continue to yield yourselves to the hypnotic influence that floods human consciousness with materiality and quenches all knowledge of God? Under evil's banner you are lost. Imperialism in religion and medicine will fall. Material philosophy leads but to the mire. Medical tyranny through legislation will bring anarchy. Disarmament leads not to peace, if the human mind remain unchanged. Aligned with matter, you but fight against God. And your leader has fallen in that unequal contest."

Again she paused. Then, suddenly opening her arms wide to them, she cried: "Oh, I love you, *love* you all! But my love is of the Christ! It will heal and bless and restore! Oh, I cry unto you, as did the Baptist: *'Metanoia!' Get you a complete and radical change of thought!* You are a chosen generation only as you actively express Principle! Come, then! Choose ye this day God! The world needs you—oh, how it needs the honest doctor, the earnest, loving, patient doctor who does not exploit his fellows, but who, recognizing the world's present state of thought, and knowing that a material manifestation may fill some temporary requirement in the human struggle to put off the false and fleeting sense of things for the knowledge of the spiritual real, is open in thought to the true Christ-method of healing, and is walking toward the Light, determined that, like Luke, he will not resist Truth for money, prestige, or human power, but will lay aside his uncertain material modes for the Science employed by the beloved Nazarene."

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Dawn was already streaking the eastern sky when the delegates and guests left the little cottage. For hours they had sat listening to the girl; and when, after telling them the absorbing

story of Lost Israel and her journey in their footsteps, she bade them go, they met her with a protest.

Again the Executive Committee met with Doctor Proast. And again the necessity of adjourning the convention *sine die* was advanced—and this time recognized. The national medical associations served notice that they had decided against amalgamation with the Roake organization—"And without them we are helpless," Doctor Proast admitted. The ministers likewise sent word that they would withdraw, not having thoroughly understood the animus of the organization. The subject of healing was too vast, too vital, they said, to be lightly handled, and they intended to give it further and more serious consideration.

A Jewish rabbi sought out David Barach. "You have done a good work," he said, shaking with emotion. "In ancient days the Hebrews taught the power of Spirit and healed by it. But now we have sickness and trouble because we have strayed from the sacred truths. It is my intention hereafter to devote every Friday evening service to teaching and practicing spiritual healing. I shall abandon the lifeless form and ceremonial, and shall study to return my people to the spiritual life of our fathers and to that spiritual knowledge—now lost to us—that removes every condition bringing sickness and discord into men's lives."

And the legislators who had come to hear the proposed bills for medical legislation advised that the bills be not submitted. One of them, on leaving the cottage, had commented under his breath: "These political doctors are getting too fresh!" Rowley knew that the remark covered a deeper sentiment unvoiced. And he took advantage of it to propose that a bill be introduced to dissolve the iniquitous Wess law. "A law," he explained, "that permits the Health Executive to seize at his pleasure the entire population of this town, if he deem them 'carriers' of disease, and compel them to submit, not only to examination and medication, but to imprisonment and isolation, without the observance of even such steps as the police are required to take in making arrests and imprisonments of criminals—such a law is a retrogression to barbarism!" And his sentiment found hearty acceptance among the legislators. "The girl did not tell you," Rowley went on, "that she discovered in the Tower of London the records of a case at law during the reign of Henry the Seventh, in the fifteenth century, in which the court was asked to enjoin a party against using the subtle craft of enchantment, witchcraft and sorcery. In other words, the court was asked to take jurisdiction of *mental* crimes. Roake was a British subject. He had committed crimes in the

British Empire through suggestion, just as he did here. I have no doubt that English law would have taken cognizance of their mental nature, as in the fifteenth century. The time is at hand, gentlemen, when courts must cease to restrict the power of human law to *matter,* while the real criminal, mortal mind, escapes to repeat the crimes."

"That must come," said one of the more enlightened members of the legislature. "But for the present let me say that we have had quite enough of this persistent drive to place the health regulation under the power of the political doctor and to adopt at his bidding outrageous restrictions of the people's liberties, such as tend to undermine our constitutional form of government." And Rowley knew as they left that the Roake plan had tottered to its fall.

When they were gone, Marian went to the rector and took his hand. "Be of good comfort," she said, looking lovingly into his moist eyes. "Your light has come. Rejoice, for your work is at hand. The great need of the world to-day is for *right mental activity.* The world will be saved only by thinkers who reflect the Christ-Mind. The stupendous task of teaching the people to think for themselves and to think aright has scarcely begun. No greater blessing could be bestowed upon us than that of teaching mankind to think as did the Master. The one thing *not* taught in our colleges, our schools, our homes, is a knowledge of God—yet to know Him aright is Life eternal. That work will now become yours, as it is Alden's, David's, mine."

He forced a smile. "I . . . I . . . may lean on you . . . yet a little while?" he asked tremulously. "Oh, Marian, I have so much to do!"

"But I will not desert you," she said, pressing his hand.

He became silent. Then he smiled up at her. "I . . . I shall ask you and Alden to assist me, if you will, to remove from the rectory. And I . . . I have a task to perform. . ." He paused and looked his embarrassment. "Two barrels of sermons . . . and boxes and boxes of them!" he exclaimed. "I wish to burn them before I leave the rectory!"

"What!" she laughed back at him. "Not those powerful sermons in support of the material evolution of life? Especially that one on 'The Fall of Man'?"

He nodded. "Yes," he said sadly, "'The Fall of Man' has fallen prone."

"And that marvelous sermon in which you proved beyond all controversy that the bread and wine were transmuted by you into actual flesh and blood?"

"Yes."

"But surely not that one in which you routed all who sought healing by spiritual means?"

He flushed. Then she threw her arms around him and kissed him. "Forgive me," she begged. "I just *had* to tease you. But I love you so! And Alden and I will come and help you with your little *auto da fé* to-morrow. Then you will come back to work with us."

Then Doctor Benson came to her to report that Senator Chaddock was comfortably installed in the doctor's own apartments, and that Boots would look after him. "And," he added, "the old senator looks brighter. He actually seems to have been, in a manner, released by Roake's passing."

"He can be restored," said the girl. "He shall be. Satan can not hold him bound. He is now *my* charge, Doctor—yours and mine."

Chaplain Muller had asked to be permitted to remain for a final word with Marian. He now came to her with his burning query. "I am German," he said. "Am I therefore condemned?"

She took his hand. "Jesus did not condemn sinful persons, but the false thought that they permitted to use them," she said. "Those who become real Christians remain neither Jew nor Gentile; they are then Sons of God; they are Israel."

"But the German race?"

"Humanly speaking," she answered, "the Germans are a people known anciently as the High Iranians. They dwelt in the land later known as Assyria, and were themselves called Assyrians. They were a Shemitic race. Their capital city was Jermania, and was located not far from Nineveh. When the ten captive tribes escaped out of Media, the country of the Low Iranians, and fled north, these High Iranians followed them, and later occupied the lands that the tribes of Israel vacated when they passed on to the British Isles and the northern countries. William the Second, the Kaiser, is descended from the House of David through the eldest daughter of Queen Victoria, but not through a male descendant. His father was a Hohenzollern, whose father before him had merged the German peoples into a Prussian autocracy, along the densely materialistic lines of the old Assyrian autocracy that opposed the Word. Not all in the German domain are of the old High Iranian race. This is especially true of the Saxons, Isaac's sons. But these were in bad company, and were forced to fight against their own brethren.

"Literal Israel anciently became the custodian of the Word, and through her the great spiritual truths that will construct the new heaven and the new earth have come. The spiritual

revelation always comes to the receptive thought. Thus it came to those who were receptive before Abraham's day and who, because of it, became great. The great truths passed to Abraham, for he was obedient to the things of God. Then to his descendants. Long centuries later the people became disobedient to the warnings of the prophets, even as they are to-day, and yielded themselves to the tempting claims of materiality. Mighty spiritual deeds were done—called 'wonders'—yet despite them, the people were unable to stand for Truth. And so they lacked real strength and were easily carried into exile. The ten tribes of Israel were scattered throughout the earth; the two tribes, the Jews, have since had no nation, no country. These have continued to cling to their traditional form of worship and to reject the spiritual message of Jesus. The ten tribes, however, accepted his teachings—at least literally—and have spread them everywhere.

"But the literal teachings without the Spirit, without the 'works' following in proof thereof, have brought mankind to another *impasse,* as in the centuries gone. Just when mortal man thinks his world secure and his civilization complete, his house falls about his head. Again it is proved to him that human government is found sadly wanting. But not until 'the government shall be upon *his* shoulders', not until Principle governs in the consciousness of all men shall discord cease. There are some who discern this to-day, some who see that autocracy and the reign of false thinking are weakening and nearing their end, and that they are for that reason striving desperately to continue their hold on suffering humanity. There are some who see that the fulness of time has come. And, in fulfillment of prophecy, they see the world passing under the beneficent guidance of Anglo-Israel, until such an hour as it shall pass to Him whose right it is. To the world the times are strangely 'out of joint'. But false beliefs are breaking up; the 'Stone Kingdom' which is to become a great mountain and fill the earth is at hand. Truth is overturning, overturning, and the lies are being threshed out and burned.

"But always there is a remnant. Though the princes and politicians in Constantine's day stifled Christianity by embracing it to further their own worldly ends, yet the 'royal line' had been established from the 'prince of the scarlet thread'. Lost Israel was the protector of this line. Ephraim slowly developed the political birthright; and Manasseh, the 'branch' that ran over the wall, came to this western hemisphere to develop the spiritual. And here primitive Christianity has again been revealed. And the revelation of it has begun the destruction of all that cannot measure up to Principle.

"Oh, Israel is he who wrestles with error and, overcoming it, is born again! And, though he were German or Turk, when the human concept becomes dissolved the Son of God, Mind's perfect reflection, stands forth as the real Man. Israel from the beginning bid for mastery of the world: it was the human expression of the real mastery of the Sons of God. But it is only *spiritual* Israel that can really dominate, for then the domination is of God. The reality of time, of human history, and all the educated beliefs, associations, and attachments of mortal men are but part and parcel of the reflection of the communal mortal mind. Yet the development of the wonderful discovery of literal Israel's identity with the Anglo-Saxons is a great step in human progress. It is far closer to Principle than the deadly concept of racial enmity, and is therefore good. But, as Browning wrote, 'Progress is the law of life; man is not Man as yet'. The war against Israel will be continued by the Assyrian, error, until Israel learns that God and evil cannot both exist. Spiritual Israel, the real Man, must be revealed to mankind by the literal. . ."

"It *has* been revealed in these last days," said Alden, coming to them at that moment, "and by a woman."

Then, quite irrelevantly, as he smiled down at the girl: "Your wonderful grandfather has reverted to his hobby, and has his maps spread out over the dining-room table, while Zuleyka is explaining the Pyramid to him for the thousandth time."

The chaplain threw Marian a questioning glance. She rose. "Come," she said, "let us hear her."

Gathered about the table, the little company listened to the Egyptian. As the low cadences of her voice fell upon their ears they seemed to pass under the spell of the Pharaohs. Before them stood Mizraim's great "altar", type of the spiritual Pyramid whose corner-stone is discovered to be the Christ. Into this great record of human history they delved, only to find themselves driven down the long entrance passageway toward the bottomless pit, pursued by evil, the Dragon star.

But anon Spirit spake to them, and they turned. The upward passage out of bondage, and which for 3,000 human years had been blocked by a huge portcullis of stone, stood open before them. Moses had smitten the rock, and led Israel out of bondage to the Pharaohs. Up, up they painfully toiled, along the Pyramid inches that indicate centuries of human history, up through the 1542 inch-years of the Jewish dispensation, their backs bent under the heavy law. Then, with a glad cry, they stood upright in the glorious gallery seven times higher. They had entered the Christian dispensation. The Christ had been revealed!

Along the sides of the Grand Gallery the graves stood open and empty, for death had been robbed of its spoils. Thirty-three inch-years onward, through the human record of him who o'ercame the dragon—thence across the great convulsion that marked error's mightiest attempt to destroy the Word—on and upward and on, to the high step. . .

"It is 1813 inch-years from the birth of Jesus to this step," the Egyptian said. "The step is 36 inches high. Then the walking is no longer upward, but horizontal, easy, and light. Man stands upright now. Why?

"Go forward, and 61 inch-years from the top of the great step the Grand Gallery comes to an abrupt end. The Christian dispensation suddenly ends. Yet the wall leans in 4 inches here. The time has been foreshortened. The length of this gallery along the floor is 1882 inch-years. But the horizontal and easy walking begins 61 inch-years before. Does that indicate the year 1821? If so, what occurred then?"

Penberry looked up and around at his companions. Madam Penberry replied, though cryptically: "To human sense, might it not be that someone whose life was to shape mankind's destiny was born in that prophetic year?"

But she did not elucidate. And Zuleyka soon resumed. The Christian dispensation, according to the measurement of the Grand Gallery floor and the great step, ended after 1910 inch-years. What occurred of vast importance in the year 1910? Did that one of whom Madam Penberry has just spoken pass from human sight then?

"And then the passageway drops, and we must once more stoop. And our progress now is slow and painful, and our backs are again bent. Why? But, see, this end wall of the Grand Gallery leans 4 inches inward. Does it indicate two dates of mighty import in human history, the years 1910 and 1914? For after 1914 we are bent under the crushing burden of the great war upon the Word.

"Then, from the choking passageway we emerge into the Antechamber. And there now we are being measured, measured, plumbed, and lined. Where do you stand? Where does mankind? For, hear me, these are the last days. And in them the Christ has again appeared on earth, and the seals are broken. But error fights against it, and through priest and king it struck to slay the Christ in the great war just closed. Oh, how we have been humbled! But think you peace has come? Let not that mesmerism deceive you again! The King's Chamber is indeed beyond—but it shall not be reached until men know their God and acquire the spiritual qualities which it outlines. The preparations for war go forward cease-

lessly, though the world believe that it has returned to the normal, for mankind will not yet give up their idols of matter and receive the spiritual Christ. And so they cannot destroy the dragon.

"Oh, that the world would hear the Pyramid's message! Oh, that it might know the significance of the Queen's Chamber —where no mortal queen was ever sepulchered, but which breathes in words of stone the 'wholeness' message of one who, following in the foosteps of the Master, reveals again the healing Christ to a dying world. The message is revolutionary—it overthrows the imperialism of Church and Medicine and State —it destroys the material concept and angers those who worship matter—but it opens the gates of heaven."

She turned suddenly to Marian. "But *you* have heard the message and have obeyed. *You* are the remnant. *You* shall escape the perils, *you* shall teach and save!"

Chaplain Muller, wide-eyed and marveling, looked at Marian. "Do you . . . do you believe her?" he asked in an awed whisper. "Do you believe those dates are intentionally given in the Pyramid? Do you believe it is more than a tomb?"

Marian glanced toward Madam Penberry who sat at her side. Chaplain Muller followed the girl's glance. But the white-haired woman only smiled.

Then Marian quoted softly: " 'In that day there is an altar to Jehovah in the midst of the land of Egypt; even a pillar at the border thereof to Jehovah, and it shall be for a sign and witness to Jehovah of hosts in the land of Egypt.' In this day of dense materialism, in the Egyptian darkness of the human mind, the Christ-Truth witnesses to the Allness of Spirit, God."

The Egyptian resumed. But Alden, leaving the others listening again fascinated, drew Marian with him, and together they stole away and out upon the little porch in the frosty air to greet the morning sun. "I cannot hear any more," he said. "My thought is bursting with the great Father-Mother's revelation. I seem to be with John on Patmos. I seem to hear his revelation telling of 'a woman clothed with the sun', of her who should complete the fulfillment of prophecy."

"The Father-Motherhood of God was taught centuries ago," Marian replied. "In ancient Egypt the novitiate in the mysteries passed between two obelisks that guarded the temple of On. One of these ancient monuments stands to-day in London, the other in New York. In the early mysteries of the Shepherd Kings this dual truth of the Father-Motherhood of God was taught by the companion blocks of stone on either side of the entrance passage to the Great Pyramid. For the Pyramid,

Alden, appears to be but an ancient temple, built by that mysterious personage who entered Egypt in the days of Khufu and subdued it without material weapons. The same great person doubtless founded Jerusalem, for the city is so closely associated with the mysteries and structure of the Pyramid. Was it Melchisedec? Perhaps, to human sense. And Melchisedec was a type of the Christ."

"And the seals are being broken in these last days," said Alden. "It is woman who has broken them and given to the world a higher concept of the Christ, who has revealed again the Father-Motherhood of God. Woman has waited long, but she has conquered. And now she is indeed 'clothed with the sun', for she is chosen to represent Truth."

"And Truth," said Marian, "as Esdras wrote near the 'willow-fringed rivers of Babylon' twenty-three centuries ago, *endureth and is always strong; it liveth and conquereth forevermore.*"

He stood looking down at her. "What strange significance lies in the placing of the twin obelisks, one in England, the other in America. Thus Manasseh supplements Ephraim."

He bent over her and took her hand. "Marian," he said, "I am Ephraim, you are Manasseh. We supplement each other. Though in spiritual harmony human marriage, like all concepts of sense, finds no place, yet 'man is not Man as yet'. In the great task upon which you and I have entered shall we not work as one? I shall go forward toward the Light until I reach the Kingdom. But . . . oh, my Miriam, shall I go . . ."

"Not alone, Alden dear, not alone." She smiled up at him. "For," she whispered, "I shall go with you."

He drew her close. Again she spoke, and again he bent low to hear her words.

"Oh, thou Israel! *'Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light'.*"

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